This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

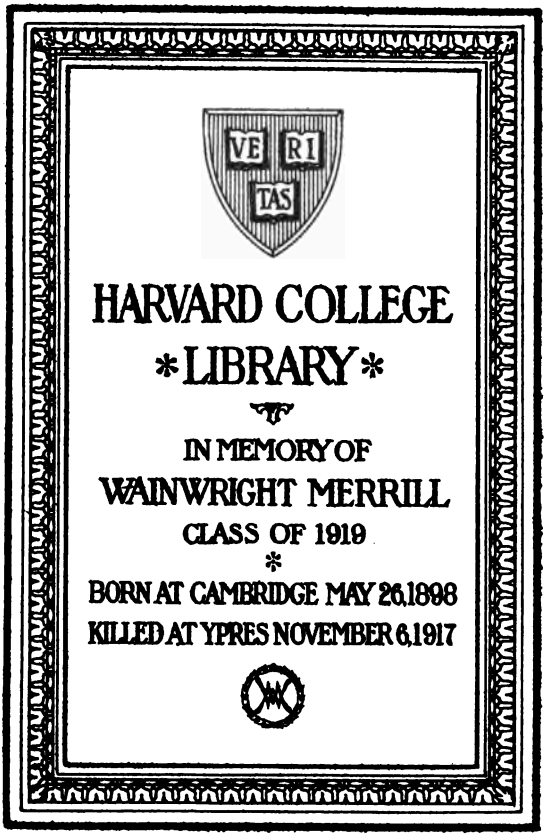
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

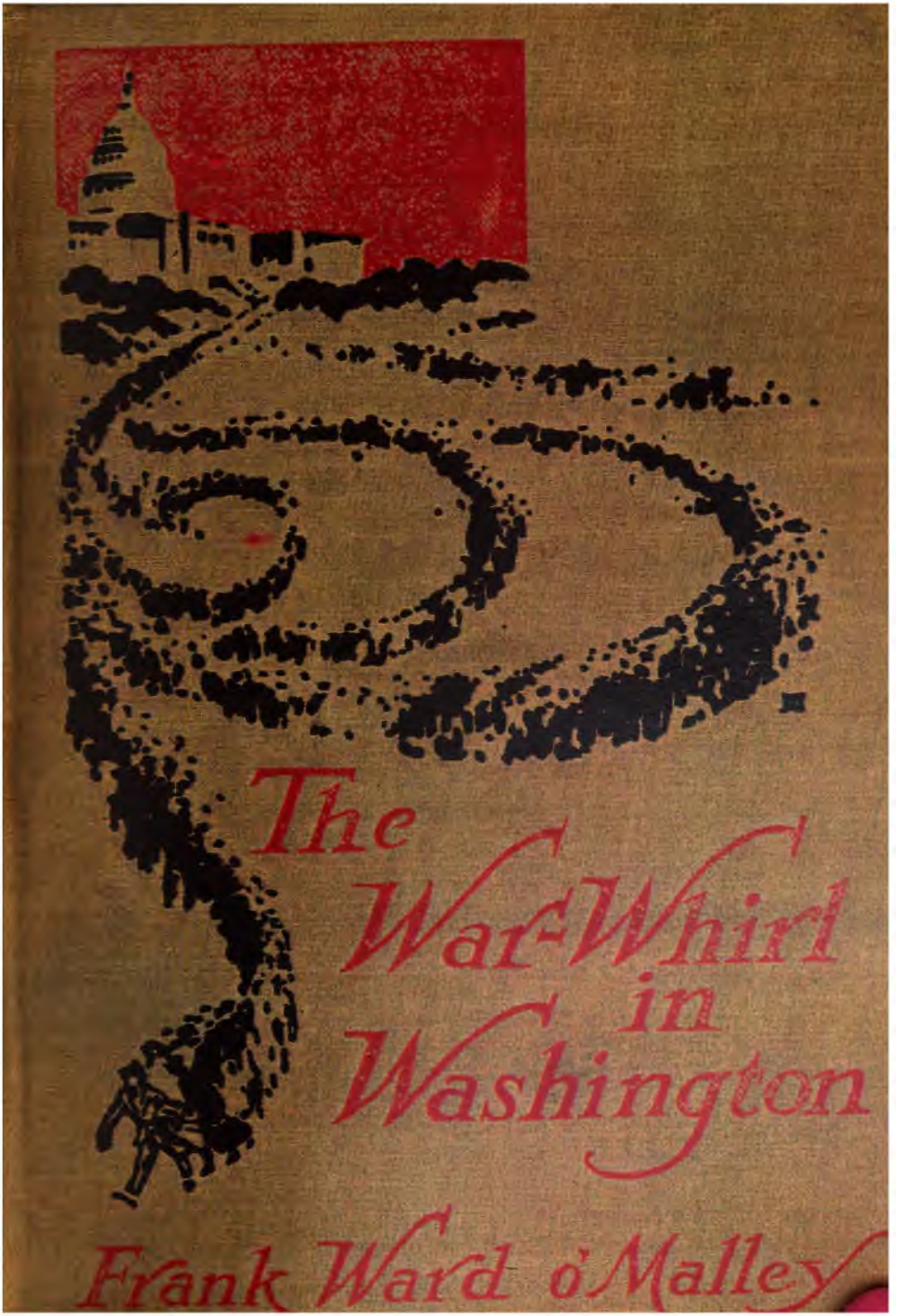
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

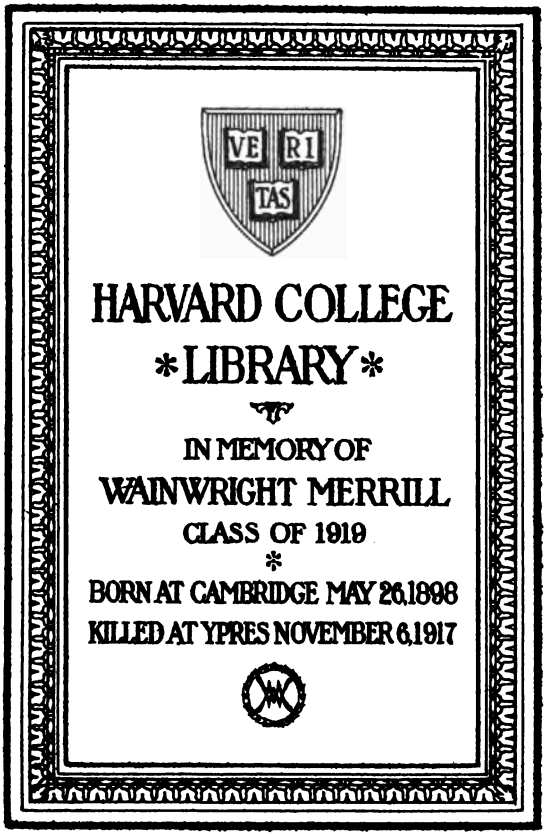
About Google Book Search

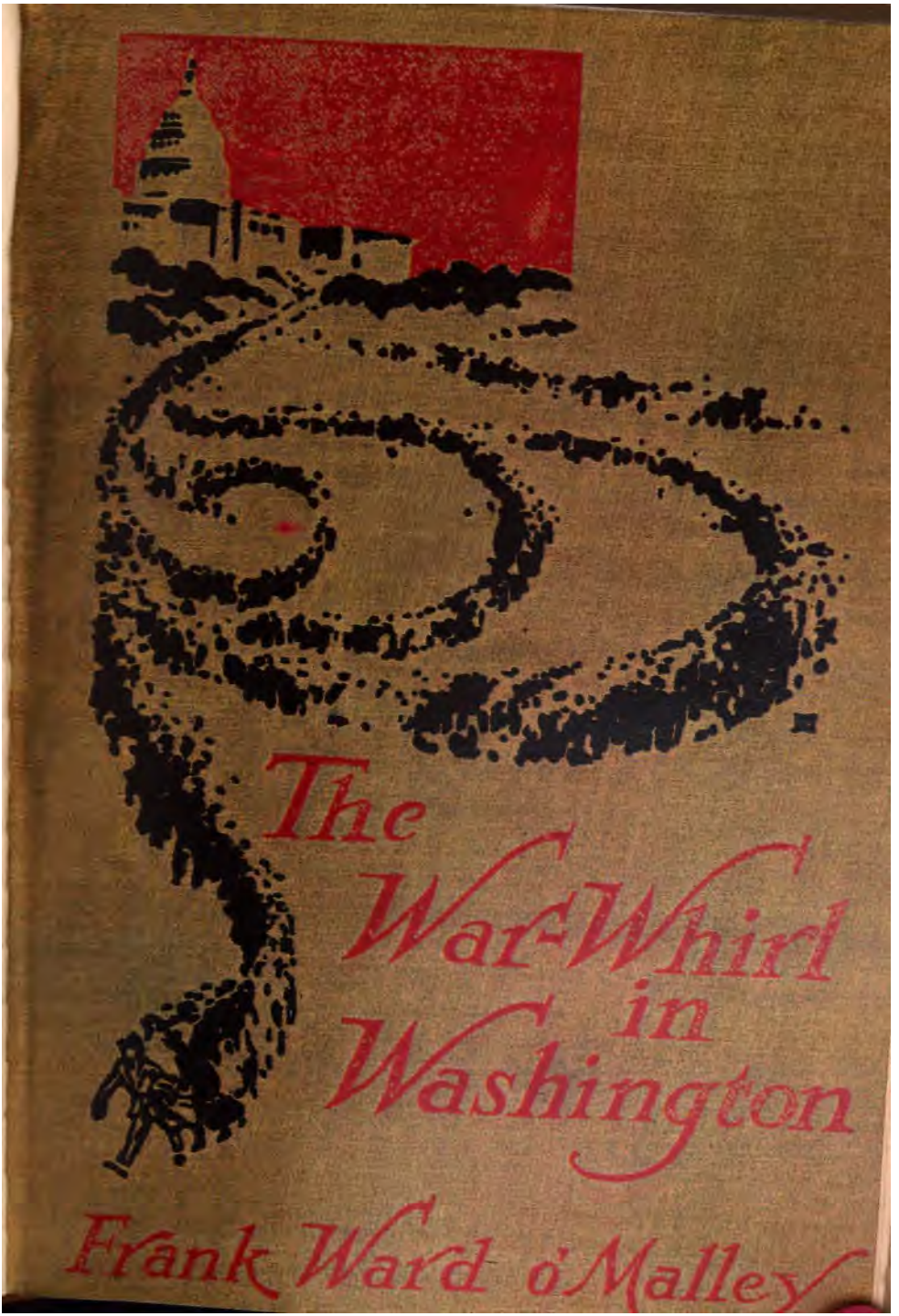
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`


VE RI
TAS
HARVARD COLLEGE
LIBRARY
IN MEMORY OF
WAINWRIGHT MERRILL
CLASS OF 1919
*
BORN AT CAMBRIDGE MAY 26,1898
KILLED AT YPRES NOVEMBER 6,1917


The War-Whirl in Washington
Frank Ward O'Malley

THE WAR-WHIRL IN WASHINGTON


VE RI
TAS
HARVARD COLLEGE
LIBRARY
IN MEMORY OF
WAINWRIGHT MERRILL
CLASS OF 1919
*
BORN AT CAMBRIDGE MAY 26,1898
KILLED AT YPRES NOVEMBER 6,1917


The War-Whirl in Washington
Frank Ward O'Malley

I decided that the room had been used as a bar

THE WAR-WHIRL IN WASHINGTON

BY

FRANK WARD O'MALLEY

OF THE NEW YORK SUN

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS
BY TONY SARG

NEW YORK
THE CENTURY CO.
1918

US 18054.25

HARVARD
UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY
JUL 13 1943

Merrill Fund

Copyright, 1918, by
THE CENTURY CO.

Published, May, 1918

BOOKLAB CMR
8/93

TO

THE LADY WHO DOUBTLESS HAS BEEN
SOMEWHAT MISQUOTED HEREIN,

MY WIFE

FOREWORD

"He doesn't want gloom, he does want efficiency,"— that is the way one who is daily in closest touch with our war President described Mr. Wilson's attitude toward trying days like these. He golfs, he goes to the theatre, he motors. State dinners and similar social functions temporarily have been discontinued at the capital, largely for economic reasons; in bringing the social gayeties to an end the frame of Administrative thought was far from that kind of early Puritan gloom which forbid bear baiting, "not because the sport gave pain to the bear but because it gave pleasure to the spectators."

The hardest of hard workers in the legions of war toilers in Washington would be the last to advise against moments of relaxation just now. And if the lighter sides of life in the capital are accented in the chapters that follow, the merrier phases are not gone into because of a lack of appreciation of the solemnities of the blackest

of world tragedies, but solely with the hope that at least a semblance of a smile will be brought to the faces of a people who have so little time to seek out the sources of smiles just now, even in their moments of recreation.

The greater part of these pages was written about the time of the big Teutonic (and therefore fruitless) Spring drive of 1918, a military offensive which was coincident with the real beginning of a glorious speeding up of our own war policies. Indeed the garrulous lady quoted so frequently herein insists to-day that until well into the present year she continued to hold a mirror to the pale lips of our military programme without noting the faintest mist of moisture on the glass. But although she remains firm in her belief, even at this late day, that what she says in the following chapters "still goes," it is worthy of note that as our war-whirling Washington day by day whirls faster and faster, just so steadily she approaches a state of cheerfulness that is ecstatic.

— F. W. O'M.

New York City,
May, 1918.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	KNOCK!—AND IT SHALL BE OPENED, MAYBE	3
II	ROOMS, RUM AND RUCTIONS	34
III	WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE, BUT NOT A SINGLE DRINK	63
IV	"ALL'S RIOTOUS ALONG THE POTOMAC!"	96
V	THE TOWN WITH THE TROLLEY OFF	117
VI	THE EAGLE CHIRPS	128
VII	SHERMAN WAS RIGHT	167
VIII	ALL BOUND ROUND WITH A RED WOOL STRING	199
IX	THE WAR AND THE WHITE HOUSE	230
X	THE MUTUAL ADMIRATION CLUB	265

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

I decided that the room had been used as a bar *Frontispiece*

FACING PAGE

And I was off toward the little flowershop before the wife had scarcely begun her faint protests . . . 16

I took him behind a pillar and gave him a tip . . . 33

Laughed heartily when asked for a room and bath . 37

Thence behind a furnace ..., and so, ever onward . . 44

And the coal magnate climbed into the only vacant barber-chair 49

So I firmly resolved, before I lost consciousness . . 64

From every waistcoat pocket were countless fountain pens 88

"Sir, I kinnot get you that numbah, being as the line is busy" 113

These are the happy days for the City of Gossip . . 128

The whole house had nothing on me for oratorical fireworks 161

"Oh, in one of our Indian wars out West," finally he admitted 176

And then there is the other kind of "inventor" . . . 225

"Second door to your left," directed the young man with a thumb jerk 240

The extreme emptiness of that little black bag . . . 273

And the extravagance of her language left me crumpled in my chair 288

THE WAR-WHIRL IN WASHINGTON

THE WAR-WHIRL IN WASHINGTON

CHAPTER I

KNOCK! — AND IT SHALL BE OPENED, MAYBE

RIBS torn free from the Granite State and chiseled into fairy-like, but everlasting, lace: clay-beds molded and baked to softest tones of saffron and magenta, and piled high, brick on brick, that sleepy old homes may nestle under the tree-arches of sunflecked streets, oldish mansions in a newish land, their walls seamed and softened to a gentle loveliness as beautiful as your old granny's wrinkled face; and effigies of the brave, astride bronze chargers that rear from pedestals of granite as solid as the hills and the hearts of the wonder city itself; boulevards stretching fanwise from the glorious dome, like finger-tips that would reach over the hills and

far away to caress even the littlest of humble hamlets — east and north, south and west, towers and domes, fringes of columned marbles, leafy slopes, and spires and minarets; and twining and wreathing, wreathing and twining it all about, the ribbon river of silver slipping ever between the Virginia and the Maryland hills, silently slipping down to the Southland sea.

In fact, some burg is Washington, *some* burg. I'm in the wool-sponging business in lower Broadway, New York, and I don't know much about writing or art except that I know what I like; and so I can't put all I think about Washington into words. I and the wife just attend strictly to our own business, I to the wool-sponging part and she to affairs around the flat. When it comes, therefore, to putting all I think about Washington into even a long paragraph, the best I can turn out is to group a lot of the fanciest things in the town, and then separate the items with periods, which is one trick I learned by reading only the best modern magazine stuff and books.

In fact, it takes a poet to sum up all that Washington is, or all that the lovely old city ever will be, and then sing the very soul of the

country's capital in three short lines of simple native patois:

Firs' 'n war!
Firs' 'n peace!
'N' las' 'n the Amurican League!

"And we 're going down and take the old burg in before the year is out, all the way from the kaiser's statue of Friederick der Gross at the War College up to, and including Joe Daniels." Thus I to the wife across the breakfast scrapple one chill morning in the autumn. "I want to see Washington at war. Next spring — what? — me for Washington, then, when the tulips are out. That 's the time to take it in: all the Virginia hills a misty green, and the crocuses blazing in the circles all over town, and the generals and admirals and everything wearing their white uniforms, and the whole shebang all lit up with sunlight — just like that time of the year Henry Van Dyke wrote about in the piece he got printed where he says, 'And fountains leap in Madison Square,' or something like that. That would be a bad little trip, what? Answer yes or no."

"No," answered the wife. She held up a hand for silence. "In the first place," she began,

"Washington is a southern city. Now, what 's the sense in staying up here in the cold and snow, so long as we 're going to make the trip at all, when we could be going south to Washington during our cold months? I want to see Washington at war, too, but I want to see it in the balmy winter-time."

"Oh, balmy my eye! Why, I 've seen blizzards busting along Pennsylvania Avenue in the winter months that —"

But there was no use shooting an unanswerable argument toward an empty breakfast-room chair. I quit. Again the next morning, and the next and next, next, next, we discussed the time of going. Autumn merged into an early winter of peculiar cussedness, and the wife was still wrapped up in that state of just plain stubbornness which causes every reasonable man to marvel more and more at the unreasonable, so-called mind workings of woman the longer man studies her "mental" processes. December was waning, and still the wife was stubborn, and I had very good reasons, which I explained to her almost daily in detail, for not giving in to her tantrums.

"In the springtime, that 's when we 're going

to Washington," I was telling her for the thousandth time when we sat down, one day during the Christmas holidays, for the regular breakfast argument. "We're going when all the Virginia hills are a misty green, and everything is like what Doc Van Dyke wrote about the fountains leaping in Madison Square, and —"

"Oh, shut up, you and your Doc Van Dyke leaping in Madison Square," broke in the wife, taking her coffee into her dressing-room, her stubbornness having at last goaded her to using extreme language. "We're going to Washington in —"

"The springtime!" I shouted before she could slam her door. I had thought the matter out calmly and reasonably. I knew where I stood on the subject, and my mind was made up to stand there.

It was a bright, sunny day in the first week in January when the last of our luggage had been piled on top of the waiting taxicab, and we, the wife and I, at last were headed toward the New York end of a Washington-bound train. Our intention was to take a train leaving late in the forenoon, but we were delayed in getting

away from the flat because the record zero weather, which in that particular week was gripping the Atlantic seaboard from the Carolinas to Canada, had frozen the radiator or something of the taxicab in front of our flat. Consequently we missed our train. It was just as well, perhaps, inasmuch as the railroad company had taken that particular Washington train off, so we learned later, in order to help win the war. Besides, the taxicab's differential, if that 's what one calls it, also had got frost-bitten during an extra last minute argument, which arose in our elevator on our way down to the taxicab.

There would n't have been any argument if it were not that I had remembered suddenly in the elevator that Washington had gone dry on the previous November 1. This thought came to me as we were shooting downward past the fourth floor; whereupon I suggested to the wife on the instant that I hurry back to the buffet in our dining-room with my little old black-leather traveling-bag, open the top of the bag and the bottom of the buffet, stock up quickly, and hurry right down again and join the wife in the taxicab. The whole process would have taken about three, maybe four, minutes. It took the wife at

least a minute in the elevator, five minutes in the apartment-house lobby, and at least three minutes more outside in three degrees below zero to ding-dong it into me that if I ran up to our dining-room buffet again for one minute, we'd miss the train. And from the general trend of the peroration which she delivered out at the curb, the blue-nose bandit shivering at the tiller of the taxicab doubtless got the notion that my chief nourishment, day and night, was hard liquor, whereas my sole reason for going back to the buffet was the sudden realization that, with every bar and café in Washington closed by the Government and the keys thrown away, there would be no place to turn to in case the wife got a chill. Leave it to a woman to twist a plea for reasonable medicinal precautions into the ravings of a dipsomaniac just to win her battle. As a matter of record, it is only fair to myself to say here that I can take a drink or leave it alone whenever I want to, my choice being merely to drink moderately each day.

"Oh, all right," I snapped finally, letting her have her own way for once, and dismissing the matter of necessary stimulants for good and all. "I'll have time at the station, anyway, to dash

into the café there and grab off a flask, just supposing you get a chill or anything while we 're away."

Believe it or not, once the taxicab buccaneer had thawed out his machinery sufficiently to get going, the wife started right in, and kept it up till we were at the ticket-window, on a line of argument which had to do with the duty of every citizen, especially in time of war, to obey the law not only in spirit, but to the letter. Feminine mentality could not be made to grasp that one small quart, say, could be carried to Washington, and then, if we found out after we had reached the capital that the law said we must not even bring the hard stuff into town, I could give the whole quart to the medical department of some deserving hospital or home for the aged or orphan asylum or something, in the District of Columbia. No, "the law is the law!" she cried. "The law is the law! The law is the law!" What kind of argument is that? By way of relief I leaned wearily against the noise of the clicking taximeter, and watched the dial numbers jump upward with every jolt.

We missed the train, as I 've said, and we should n't have been in time for it, anyway, had

we arrived on time, inasmuch as it had been taken off the schedule two days before. The idea in taking our train and a lot of others off, so it was explained to us, was the patriotic one that if a lot of passenger-trains, which never make much money, anyway, were discontinued, the company could haul just so much more Michigan furniture to Brooklyn homes, and Persian rugs from the North Philadelphia factories out to the Middle-Western trade, in other words, could expedite these and similar necessities and so win the war in Europe. The change in train-schedules, however, was not unwelcome; the delay round the station was reason enough for me to suggest that we go up near the café end of the station and have some luncheon in the restaurant.

"No! The law is the law! The law is the law!" It was the wife off on her old singsong again. "The Government has seen fit to rule that Washington remain dry, and the law is the law!"

My idea of entering the station café to get a flask of stimulant, which we might find so necessary in case of illness (which, in an extremity, might even save our very lives), really was a

minor reason for my suggestion that we stroll toward the crowded, or café, end of the restaurant. As I said before, and the wife knows it well; I can take a drink or leave it alone whenever I want to. I do object to being placed in a position where, supposing I want to leave it alone, I could n't do so of my own volition.

But five minutes before our early afternoon train finally did get away I had a thought. I suggested to the wife that I run up to the little flower-shop right next to the concourse café and get her some violets. It 's a theory of mine that little attentions such as flowers and the like should not end with courtship, if the wonder of early love-days is to persist through wedded life. And I was off toward the little flower-shop before the wife had scarcely begun her faint protests, opening my little old traveling-bag as I raced toward the flower-shop next to the café. Then, while the florist put the violet tinfoil and other doodads around the posy corsage, I attended to some last purchases in the immediate neighborhood, and charged back toward the train-gate, resnapping the little old black traveling-bag on the way. A redcap from Senegambia, who had been nursing our luggage up to the time

that I had cut the traveling-bag out of the rest of our roundup of baggage when starting toward the flower-shop next to the café, again tried to relieve me of my little old black traveling-bag as I rejoined the wife. Amid the crush of other patriots who were wedging their way toward the train, all headed toward the capital to help save the nation, too — amid the jam I drew the red-cap far enough to one side to whisper to him as gently as possible that if he ever tried to get that little old black traveling-bag out of my hands again, even for a second, he would spend the next three days clasping a lily in a darkened room while being survived by a widow.

The train which the wife and I and the black bag finally boarded was known as some kind of "Express," the Congressional Zipper or the Capital Catapult Express or some such federal name. Once it had consisted almost entirely of parlor-cars, but that was back in the days before all Serbia and Belgium had got together like a couple of big bullies and had pitched into the kaiser until he was goaded into taking up arms to defend a wife and seven children. Even after America had succeeded in nagging Germany to the point where the fatherland had to

protect itself against our brutal and ruthless reaching out for a port on the North Sea, there were still many parlor-cars on our particular train. But with the progress of the war, along came freight and passenger congestion and other organic troubles in the railroad's system, especially in the freight-yard terminals around New York. Wherefore the railroads took almost all the parlor-cars off the trains and stored them along whatever little strips of unoccupied trackage still remained in the terminal yards, thus relieving the yard congestion and helping to win the war. It is said that one or two mighty railroad men picked that whole plan right out of their own heads.

I didn't complain about the lack of parlor-cars, because I try to be reasonable and patriotic and everything, and I spend most of my time riding in the smoker day-coaches, anyway, even when I have seat reservations. But once the wife had compelled the parlor-car ticket person to say for the eighth time that the few chairs on the train had been sold out since some weeks back in 1917,— here it was 1918 when he was telling us this — the wife began an agonized

holler that must have lent a lot of aid and comfort to the enemy.

"What proportion of the passengers going to Washington on this train prefer parlor-car chairs to day-coach seats?" asked the wife, fixing the parlor-car man with the same eye she levels at our Amsterdam Avenue butcher while he's weighing the Sunday roast.

"Almost all, Madam," replied the ticket person, and some one not too far back in the waiting line to be beyond earshot asked the world in general if women were n't the limit.

"And how much more track-room does a parlor-car take up than a day-coach?" the wife demanded.

"None, Madam."

"Then why in time don't you run all par —"

Rudely I had to drag her away, protesting. And we got a day-coach seat almost large enough for her and our hand luggage before it was too late to grab another seat in the smoking-car big enough for me and my little old black bag.

This express train was an express because, so we learned from the schedule, once it had pulled out of New York around two o'clock in the after-

noon, it made no stops between New York and Philadelphia except at Newark. We had been told on high authority that the reason so many trains had been taken off the line was the war-time necessity of keeping the road wide open between New York and Washington, that stretch being the most important bit of railroad trackage, at this particular time, in the world. And so, with this in mind, the railroad men, by working snappily all around the terminal, got our train under way on the wide-open track in less than half an hour after it was scheduled to leave. By 3:22 o'clock I was relieved to see, upon looking up from my paper, that we were well on our way to the capital. I remember the exact time, because just outside the smoker-window was a station with a big clock, and a station sign reading "Elizabeth"; and standing on the platform was one of our own trainmen crying in tones of finality, "Ex-press turain to Phildelfyahbalteemorenworshunton! This turain does not stop butween Nooark and Norrrrrthphildelfyah! *'Board!*" I remembered vaguely having heard the same person say the same thing about half an hour earlier at Nooark, the trainman having had no way of knowing then, of course, that the en-

And I was off toward the little flowershop before the wife had scarcely begun her faint protests

gineer, owing to the war, was going to change his mind and stop at Elizabeth.

Somebody many years earlier had forgotten to make the train-shed at Philadelphia long enough to hold a train of day-coaches of the length of our particular string of cars. We had just passed Trenton, where the express also was brought to a stop long enough to take aboard two women and a crate containing a Chow dog, when news that the train was too big for the Philadelphia train-shed began to permeate through our cars. The conductor plainly was vexed. Finally he stopped the train on the far side of the Delaware River and called the engineer out of his cab so they could talk the matter over along the roadside. The afternoon was waning, and we were fretting to get on; so I suggested from the platform that the train, provided it kept to the pace it had set for itself since 2 o'clock, could temporarily be run by the fireman, thus permitting the engineer and conductor to walk along beside it while settling the knotty Philadelphia problem. The best I got from the engineer for my suggestion was a request to mind my own darn business.

"So you 're running the railroads, too?" the

conductor asked me, I thought a bit sarcastically. "Well, go to it, old top," he added; "we might as well make it unanimous."

I left them to wrestle with the problem without my help. They could n't master it unaided; wherefore they were compelled to decide finally to run right by Philadelphia with a hearty laugh, pausing only long enough out in West Philadelphia to dump off whatever passengers for the center of the city might be aboard. Here was an idea not altogether displeasing to the Philadelphia passengers: they philosophically agreed that by being permitted to quit the train out in West Philadelphia those among them who had been standing in the aisles since leaving New York, which included most of them, could vary the monotonous journey at least to the extent of getting a seat in a trolley-car all the way from the West Philadelphia station to Broad street. Thereafter they waited eagerly for their journey's end, little realizing that while the engineer was walking back along the train to hold his roadside conference with the conductor he had noticed the great throngs of khaki-clad lads in the coaches. The sight of all the soldiers doubtless had convinced him that he was drawing a troop-train;

and as it is one of the newest articles of war — as every soldier in the new army has learned during recent months — that all troop-trains must be drawn just fast enough forward to keep the cars from backing up, the afternoon had almost perished before we came in sight of the first row of two-ply brick houses in Philadelphia's farthest Northeast.

Dusk had begun to fall by the time we had exchanged, at the West Philadelphia station, our original load of Philadelphians for a new and somewhat larger crop of Philadelphia folk heading from their own home town for Baltimore or Washington,— mostly for Washington. By this time I had become thoroughly smoked inside and out, and I remembered the wife, who is rarely far from my thoughts. Fearing that she was as hungry as I was, I looked her up in her day-coach, and suggested that we get a table in the dining-car and hang on to it all the way into Washington.

She was keen for the idea, especially when it came to her mind that we should cross the Mason and Dixon Line a few miles farther on, and would then, so she put it, "be in the sunny South, where they fry chicken so deliciously." The dining-car

conductor agreed with the wife that we'd still be in the North until we had passed some place named Iron Hill, wherever that is. Meanwhile, by wedging a way into the aisle of the diner and standing unostentatiously, but steadily, close to the chair of the most nervous-looking man, and his equally nervous wife, in the whole dining-car, that particular couple could n't help but hurry through their meal. In a run of less than ten miles flat we had secured their table and a menu.

Sure enough, chicken fried in "Southern style" was listed on the dinner-card; but from the waiter we learned that the dining-car management had sold the last of it up near Trenton to a drummer in the shoe line from Brocton, Massachusetts. Also the car was "all sold out" in the matter of roast beef and candied sweet potatoes and corn fritters and corn muffins and steaks and chops. The waiter assured us, on the other hand, that the cold tongue was beautiful, also that there was a sufficient quantity of potato salad left to make a mess. The management, it seems, had prepared so lavishly for luncheon that no time had been left to think about dinner arrangements. Also the unfortunate dining-car conductor had had no way of finding out in advance that the

train was to be just as jammed with hungry passengers on that day as it had been on preceding days for several weeks, or that the train was going to be as far behind time on that day as it had been for days and weeks innumerable.

Nothing was left for us to do but to kill time — and so hold our dining-car seats — by dawdling over the cold tongue, potato salad, and a copy of Baedeker that the wife had brought along to bone up on the way down. The list of restaurants on the first page of the Washington section of the Baedeker was most appetizing.

"There 's a whole string of them, with the addresses and everything!" the wife cried happily, and she read aloud. "Listen:—'Willard, Shoreham, Raleigh and other hotels on European plan; Capitol restaurants; also *Rathskeller,* corner Eighth and E Streets; Munich beer at Fritz Reuter's *Rathskeller,* Pennsylvania Avenue and Second Street, much frequented by Germans; Herman Steig—'"

I interrupted to ask what year that particular edition of Baedeker had been shot off the press.

"In 1909. But no matter, here are a lot of others. And listen! It says here: 'CABS—(Hacks and Hansoms). For 15 squares each

pers. 25c., each addit. [The wife is nothing if not literal, always] 5 squares 10c., at night (12.30–5 A. M.) 40 and 15c.; per hour, 12 pers.'—no, I guess Mr. Baedeker means one or two persons — 'per hour, 1 hyphen 2 pers., 75c.' Only 75 cents fer two persons for a whole hour in a taxicab Fancy that!"

I could merely mumble in reply that there were limits to my fancying powers. Even when I 'm fully awake I 'm not over-imaginative, and now it was getting past my usual bedtime; wherefore the old bean was n't working even as freely as usual along the imagination belt. I took no interest, but dozed off, even when our train began to make a leisurely sort of sight-seeing trip through Baltimore, stopping for a few minutes at a time whenever we came abreast of any of the more interesting industrial plants along the railway tracks.

With a start I was awakened by a sound like nothing so much as the persistent patter of rain. Yet the night was cloudless, cold, and clear. Our train was reposing peacefully on a siding to permit the last section of the Night Liquor Local, eastbound from Washington to Baltimore, to pant impatiently by. Some one opened a ven-

tilator in the car, and as the dry roar of the Baltimore-bound Liquor Local died away in the night, the odd pattering noise of the "rain" grew louder. Onward then our express jolted, and with each foot of progress the "rain" patter began to be threaded with a continuous tinkle of tiny bells. We listened, puzzled, until the soft patter had become a drum-fire of one long clicking sound, now sharply punctuated with the distinct tinkle of the tiny bells.

"I have it! It's type-writers. We're in Washington, Girlie, and the night shift is winning the war!"

I had it. From a milky way of lighted office windows came the "click-click-click-bing!-click-ety-ick-ick-ick · bing · slam · clinnnnng · etyclick-ick- ick- ick- bing- clunnnnng- zowie!- bang." We thrilled. We were there! Close enough, anyway, actually to hear this intellectual evidence of the war at its worst. We thought it worth while, as we inched our way near and nearer the outside ends of the station platform, to kill time with some simple arithmetic, if for no other reason than to keep our record absolutely accurate. In a measured space of time we counted 1,723,621,-804,752,116 distinct clicks, thereby learning by a

bit of simple multiplication that in an average hour even the night shift in Washington slams the typewriter-keys 11,825,191,638,727,211,912,-390,736,777,652,442,392,151 times to win the war. The wife insists that I 've got the hourly typewriting clicks all balled up in my Washington notes with the war loan figures, and maybe she 's right; but I feel sure that the 11,825,191,638,727,-211,912,390,736,777,652,442,392,151 is the total of clicks.

As in Philadelphia our train was too long to get all the way into Washington. Then when we had walked along the tracks for several city squares to the outside end of the platforms we learned that the passengers who had seats in the forward cars had corralled all the redcaps in sight. Through the black railroad yard, happily, came a man with a lantern, who explained to us that the whole trouble was that Washington was overcrowded. We thanked him.

"According to the cops," our kind informant went on, "this town has jumped from 350,000 to 400,000. And as if that ain't bad enough, the extra crowd includes Arthur Brisbane and Billy Sunday, and they say Colonel Roosevelt is threatening to come, too. It's something fierce!"

"My good man," said the wife, after we had thanked him for the additional information, "I apologize for asking one of you proud Southerners to descend to manual labor, but could n't you help us get our luggage from this spot closer into town?"

The wife was right; he was one of those proud Southerners. Under cover of darkness I slipped the catch loose on the little old black traveling-bag and whispered to him, beyond earshot of the wife, whether he had such a thing about him as a corkscrew. He did n't have anything except a corkscrew. Stifling his pride for the nonce, the Southern gentleman not only grabbed up all the wife's bags and boxes; he even tried to pry my little old black traveling-bag away from my firm grasp also.

Then somewhere on the fringe of the concourse crowd we came upon a stray redcap. He was all sewed up, he said, with engagements that would keep him busy for half an hour. Standing just beneath the redcap's visor I breathed ever so gently, just once, and the redcap paused rigidly in his flight, one foot suspended in mid-air, and his eyes glued to the little black bag. He was pointing like a bird dog. There was another

private conference on the side lines, during which I learned that the redcap not only owned a corkscrew, but also one of these little folding-cups of aluminum and a bad chill. As I took him behind a pillar and gave him a tip that half filled the folding-cup,— he had absolutely dismissed all his previous engagements by now,— the fact flashed upon me that right there in my own little black bag I had a key to the city that would enable me to go any place, enter everywhere, get anything!

A moment later the key failed to work when we tried to get through the station crowd to meet the open air. It seems that every train arriving from any place, so the redcap explained, contains at least one new member, often many, for each of the war-work committees now in the making in Washington. Envoys from all of the war-work committees also are in waiting at the Union Station always to welcome the incoming committeemen; wherefore we had to try to jimmy a passage through envoys and old-time members of committees welcoming new-comers to the Interdepartmental Advisory Committee of the Council of National Defense, the Executive Committee of the Committee Under the Advisory Committee, the Committee on Raw Materials, Minerals, and

Metals, the National Committee of Patriotic Societies' Committee to Prevent the Spread of Pernicious Rumors, the Committee on Wire Communication of the Committee of Telegraphs and Telephones, the Committee on Inland Water Transportation of the Council of National Defense, the Committee of Medical Service of Foreign Commissions, the Committee of the Aircraft Production Board, the Automotive Transport Committee, the Coöperative Committees of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, the Committee of the Industrial Inventory Section, the Friends of Irish Freedom Committee for Irish Representation at the Peace Council of the Allied Nations, the Committee on Storage Facilities, the Executive Committee of the National Research Council, the Committee of the General Medical Section Board and Medical Section of the National Council, the American Committee for Polish Independence, the Committee of the National Council Section in Coöperation with the States, the Committee on Transportation and Communication, the Advisory Committee for Aëronautics, the Alabama-Mississippi Emergency Bureau, the Georgia-Florida Yellow Pine Emergency Bureau, the Copper Producers Committee,

the Executive Committee of the National Civil Liberties Bureau, the Committee of the Shipbuilding Labor Adjustment Board, the Committee of the Popular Government League, the Railroad Executives Advisory Committees, the Committee of the Southern Hardwood Emergency Bureau, the National Committee of the Emergency Peace Federation, the Committee on Gas and Electric Service, the Committee of the Washington Business Service Bureau, the Committee of the National Society for the Prevention of the Importation of German-bred Police-dogs into the United States,—and a few more. We were fortunate in arriving on a comparatively quiet night. Some evenings the concourse is crowded.

They took every motor-car in sight. Nothing was left to the wife and me except to stand on the fringe of the committees, varying the monotony as best we could by gazing in awe southward toward the misty dome of the Capitol. There it towered, white yet vague, above the vista of Delaware Avenue, the ghost of a great, bounding balloon wraith, tugging at its fastenings as the thousands of cubic feet of hot air therein urged it, the father and mother of all gasbags, ever to fly to the heavens.

We never did get a taxicab. In Washington now there are n't any taxicabs. Close on the heels of the first onrush of war patriots upon the capital to save the nation had come taxicab chauffeurs from Baltimore, Richmond, Philadelphia, Wilmington, Pittsburgh, everywhere, their battered tin taxi-flivvers careening madly through clouds of autumnal dust as they, too, converged upon Washington to help win the war. As each taxi-skipper crossed into the District he first inquired his way toward the banks of the Potomac,— known locally as the p'Tomk,— and wrenched the taximeter off his car and flung it far out into the stream. Then, with the first cold weather, ice-floes, which in former years had floated onward calmly to the sea, began to hesitate. By the time the wife and I reached the capital the oldest inhabitants were standing on the banks of the p'Tomk at gaze, mystified, the river clogged with ice-chunks as never before. It was not until late in the winter that the city authorities finally discovered that the ice-cakes could not move because the entire channel was filled up with taximeters from Pittsburgh and all points east.

We corralled and roped some sort of car at last,

scarred a bit where the taximeter had been hastily jimmied off and thrown away; decorated, like all the other one-time taxicabs with a legend, "Auto To Hire"; manned by a direct descendant of Captain Kidd; and finished off aft with a flapping piece of the torn lining of the car top, a sort of black flag doubtless, being permitted by the skipper of the cab to flutter there in lieu of a Jolly Roger. The wife had secured, by executing a particularly prompt jump, the fifth seat inside the four-seated taxicabin, and simultaneously I had eased myself beside young Kidd outside on the hurricane-deck. "To the Pelham," cried a perfect stranger who was seated with the wife inside. "To the Williams," I said simply, I in my ignorance starting in away down the alphabet at the W's, when, had I only known then, it would have been perhaps as well and certainly no worse had I started in first at the hotels beginning with A, and systematically run through the list all the way to the Zenoble Arms, which is in farthest Georgetown.

"Boss," whispered the chauffeur, blushing as deeply as it is possible for a chauffeur to blush and trying the while to hide his shame by pretending to search for a flivver pedal concealed at

the base of the luggage mountain piled to my hat-brim —" Boss, if you know where the Pelham is, and 'll show me how to take this gent there, I 'll take you and your missus to the Williams for only one buck each. I seen the Williams this afternoon, and I can find it again; but I ain't got the lay of the rest of the town much yet because I only got here with this old boat of mine from Bristol, Pennsylvania, late last night."

All through that night we drove, and the final fare was far from one buck. At the Williams, the Pelham, and so on up the alphabet, I stood before the room clerks just long enough to ask for a room, listen a moment as the clerks broke out into hearty laughs, and turned around and walked right out to the waiting taxicab again. From the Anacostia west and north we went all the way up to the edge of the Georgetown timberline, and back and forward and back again.

Day broke. I awoke with a start. Inside the taxicabin my wife slept, oblivious. At my elbow the taximurderist was snoring steadily; and steadily the car was running, around and around and around Dupont Circle. It seems that the chauffeur, finding that we both had succumbed to weariness an hour before dawn, had artfully

set the steering-wheel so that the car would continue to loop itself in slow rings around Admiral Dupont until daylight should appear; and he had fastened the steering-gear (after learning by experiment just how far to the left it should be twisted) by piling our luggage firmly around the tiller. Then he had snuggled down into his raccoon coat-collar and had turned in.

I awakened him.

"On one of these swings around the circle," I suggested, "let 's take a chance and dart right out into any of these streets and go to some other part of town, what? We have much to do: we have to check this baggage some place, put on the breakfast nose-bag, and then start all over to look for a room. Here 's a likely-looking avenue. Shoot!"

And in no time we had set ourselves back twenty dollars, which the chauffeur concluded was fair enough for having put us up for the night, and in front of a great hotel I aroused the wife. Out the hotel door at that moment came a young ex-mayor of New York, who had just come to Washington to get a majority commission as an aviator. He was sleeping on a couch indoors. he told us, at the foot of the bed of a friend, also

I took him behind a pillar and gave him a tip

from Manhattan, who had taken him in at a time when nothing seemed left to the ex-mayor but a park bench. The bedroom was a small one and lacked a bath, the ex-mayor went on, but he kindly insisted that there was still enough vacant floor space upon which I might pile our luggage temporarily, or until we had secured some sleeping-quarters. And after that the wife and I had one of those simple old lovely Southern breakfasts for $4.80, and we sat there and sipped our coffee silently for a long, long time, thinking thoughts of the day's campaign.

CHAPTER II

ROOMS, RUM AND RUCTIONS

THERE are only three ways of getting sleeping-quarters in the national capital when one and one's wife start out on a trip to see the war-whirl in Washington these days, especially when one and the wife debark, unannounced, round midnight from a train which, on the solemn promise of the compiler of the railway-schedule, is due to reach the Union Station, Washington, at the velvety, wistful, cocktail hour of twilight. In the first place, one may spend the first night snatching bits of sleep in the meterless "taxicab"— rechristened an Auto-To-Hire — between fruitless visits to all the hotels there are, which was what the wife and I did; secondly, one may start out bright and early the next morning and begin by cruising back over the hotel route again to find any sort of Washington hotel room and bath, ending up, if one is lucky, by finding them in Baltimore, which was

what the wife did; and, finally, one may spend the second night sleeping in a Washington bar-room, which was what I did.

It was the first time I had ever slept in a bar-room all night. Since the previous November 1, or the date upon which Congress had spread a big blue blotting-pad all over the District of Columbia and had rubbed the district as good as dry, the particular hotel bar-room in mind had n't been a practical bar-room to the extent of using it for alcoholic illuminating purposes. Still, the clerk of the hotel, which is on a Fourteenth and K Street corner, continued to speak of the room as a bar in a sentimental, fondly reminiscent way, in tones one uses when speaking of "grandpa's room" long, long months after the dear old gentleman has perished.

This clerk, like all Washington hotel clerks in war-time, had laughed heartily when asked for a room and bath; then a softer emotion seemed to grip him, and he began to talk sentimentally about "our bar." It was below-stairs, in the basement, he said, and seven beds had been placed therein only that very morning. For two dollars, the clerk continued, I might sleep all night in the bar. He added that I could take it

or leave it, and he contributed the additional information that it would cost a great deal more than two dollars to sleep all night in a bar-room in any other town between New York and San Francisco, which is doubtless true.

The wife, of course, could not sleep there. Nevertheless, I decided to take an option on one of the two-dollar bar beds, which the clerk said I might do by paying something on account; say, two dollars on account. Then followed a weary day of room-seeking, varied with real thrills every time the flivver of a war contractor, headed toward the Treasury to dig another scuttleful of money out of the bins in the Treasury basement, exploded past the eyelashes of another lineal descendant of Captain Kidd who was navigating our meterless "taxi." The hastening contractors hit us only twice that first day, and they were good enough to scatter their shots so that one contractor hit the wife's side of our Auto-To-Hire, damaging her mud-guard, whereas the other contractor slammed in on my side of our car, thus avoiding all jealousy, and hit me back of the Pension Office.

Too much was enough. Half a dozen squares to the east of the Pension building loomed the

Laughed heartily when asked for a room and bath

Union Station. There we repaired forthwith, and by telephone the wife got in touch with the Baltimore Young Woman's Christian Association and a room. I had just time to grab off a seat for her in an outgoing day-coach of one of the late afternoon sections of the Washington-Baltimore Liquor Local, which reaches Baltimore just before the dinner-hour, and is known, I believe, to some of the district natives as the Martini Flier, and by many more as the Bronx Express, each according to taste. Anyway, this particular *apéritif* section was ready to get under way toward the dinner-hour; so the wife and I parted regretfully, but cheered by the realization that temporarily, at least, we would have comfortable sleeping-quarters; the wife in the Baltimore Y. W. C. A. and I in the Washington bar-room. Fair enough!

With no sleep so far on our little pleasure-jaunt since leaving the old home in Manhattan the day before save the occasional taxinaps on the previous night's cruise of the city in search of a room, I was keen for my bar-room bed the minute the wife had departed on the Baltimore-bound Liquor Local. But the uncertainty of our future housing accommodations during our

prospective Washington visit caused me to spend what was left of the day and evening searching the widths and depths of Washington in a last effort to find quarters. Betimes I broke the monotony of my lone motor-ride by telephoning to the houses of friends who had rented homes in Washington in ante-bellum days, and were still able to pay bellum rents. As I made my identity known to said friends over the wire, the news that I was in Washington was about as welcome as a coal bill in father's Christmas mail. One might have thought, to judge from the cordiality of the voice without the smile at the other end of the telephone line, that I was Billy Sunday calling up a friend and accidentally getting in touch with the Distillers' League.

One could n't, however, blame these Washington friends: that thought, long ago struck off, to the effect that "Providence provides us with our relatives, but, thank Heaven! we can pick our own friends," does n't work out in Washington as well as once it did. In times like these, for instance, young Brother-in-law Horace, junior at Yale if he had gone back the autumn after the war declaration, decides to leave the dear old col flat on its back in New Haven and go down

to Washington and look around for a governmental job, where he can grapple with some big work that requires brains and untiring energy and all that sort of thing. So in drops Horace, accompanied by much luggage, and stays at Brother-in-law Elmer's house, out Chevy Chase way, while looking for the best job in the army, navy, or civil department which will enable him to bring the kaiser to his knees, yelling for help, in the shortest possible time. And Horace has scarcely settled subacutely in the guest-room when young Cousin Estelle, the celebrated Philadelphia stenographer, comes to take the room opposite the one Brother-in-law Horace has commandeered, Estelle also in search of a job where she can save the nation. When a brand-new population about the size of a manufacturing city like South Bend drops in unexpectedly upon a small-sized large town, already comfortably filled, such as Washington, there are bound to be a few crates of relatives in the consignment. Consequently the residential sections of the national capital early in the war had become an omnibus family reunion, wherein pop and mom soon were all fed up with visitors.

"Come up and see us one day while you 're

here," they said over the telephone to me, with all the warmth of Charles Evans Hughes opening his front door and finding a delegation of California voters on the front stoop. Now if they had only asked me to come up even for one night I might have given three rousing cheers. Not a chance. Still, I hold no grudges; they 're more to be pitied than censured.

All that was left for me to do was to hang up the receiver, climb into the old seagoing pirate craft, Auto-To-Hire, and pull up the mud-hook again. The later the hour, the more that bar-room bed invited; but before giving up and turning in I tacked around circles and squares and in and out avenues and streets long enough to learn that in a war-time Washington there are, to wit: hall bedrooms (or if-you-can-get-'em hall bedrooms) of an ante-bellum rental of ten dollars a month which suddenly have puffed up into bellum if-you-can-get-'ems at forty and fifty dollars a month; that very swagger houses, which recently were rented for ten thousand dollars a year now bring twenty-five thousand dollars yearly; that one lady, who had had an unfurnished apartment for which she paid ninety dollars a month, had patriotically rented the rooms,

furnished, during the first war winter at a rate of only five hundred dollars a month, pocketing three thousand dollars for six months as her slight bit toward winning the war; that ante-bellum furnished apartments in the hundred and fifty dollars a month class bring very often three hundred and fifty dollars and more a month in bellum days; that befo'-de-wah — ouh wah — flats, unfurnished, at seventy-five dollars now commonly are rented at two hundred and twenty-five and two hundred and fifty dollars furnished. About the only government priority certificate which a man of influence cannot get is a priority certificate for a room and bath.

Just three persons came to notice on that first day of cruising who seemed ecstatically happy over the sudden swamping of their home town. The three were young government clerks of vision. With the first of the war-time onrush the three had taken a running leap at the throat of a renting agent, and had corralled three vacant apartments, paying all of thirty-five dollars a month for each of the flats. Then they had raced into the nearest instalment house, and had carted away to the three vacuous flats enough bilious-looking yellow oak furniture to cause the

late William Morris to turn three times rapidly in his grave. And as most government employees round Washington seem to be able to knock off work about noon each day and keep absolutely out of the war until 2:30 o'clock in the afternoon, the three, within a luncheon "hour," had so thoroughly rented their, in a manner of speaking, furnished flats that thereafter they have been splitting up almost five hundred dollars rent profits monthly into three piles. Now they stand in front of the Treasury daily and laugh and laugh and laugh at it.

A late-arriving visitor can in a pinch, of course, look up a Turkish bath; but what 's the use? There was the famous coal-baron magnate who came to Washington in recent days to confer with Fuel Administrator Garfield. When late in the afternoon the conference was ended, the coal magnate of millions decided to stroll toward one of the large hotels and casually select a pleasant room and bath, *just like that!* And some time after midnight, still sleepily seeking a room that was not, the magnate saw an electric lighted "Turkish Bath" sign in G Street. Down in the basement depths he came upon a bath as full as three aces and a pair of kings.

There was one barber-chair still vacant, however; the other chairs in the tonsorial salon of the baths had, hours earlier, been rented out for sleeping-quarters. And the coal magnate of millions, breathing a night prayer of tearful thankfulness, peeled off his coat and collar and climbed into the only vacant barber-chair berth and slept whatever sleep of innocence still is permitted to a coal-baron magnate. So far as can be learned, Washington has n't yet begun to rent sleeping-spaces on the bootblacks'-chairs, but the war is young yet. Nor in dentists'-chairs. The chauffeurs of the Auto-To-Hire cars, freshly arrived from far scattered cities, to be in on the pickin's, were sleeping nightly, however, in their one-time taxicabs early in the war-days, even when the taxibrigands could find nothing in the way of a garage roof but the clear, cold skies of night.

When one stops to think that about the time America jumped into the war-whirl there were, all told, only about eighty-five persons in the offices of the Ordnance Department, including everybody from the boss to the office boy, and that before the following Christmas there were in the same department in Washington about thirty-five hundred souls, which promises to be

closer to ten thousand by the time these lines stagger into print, then one must see that this, plus a like swelling of forces in innumerable other governmental departments, early resulted in a considerable hatful of new white folks around town. A couple of Easter bonnet-boxes would have housed the Ordnance Department, even as late as two years after General Leonard Wood had begun to say it was utterly impossible for America to keep out of the war. Then shortly after it began to dawn upon Washington that General Wood not only was right, but could produce the papers and prove it, more than a dozen shed-like buildings, each a city square long, had to be thrown together down round Sixth and D streets, N. W., to house the ordnance forces. The figures should n't be disturbing. Washington always was a glutton for numerals of magnitude, and with the present jump in population, and trifles such as the billions voted every few minutes by Congress for something or other urgently needed, figures are flying in a war-time Washington which, at least by comparison, make even the grand total of the "Games Lost" column of the Washington base-

Thence behind a furnace..., and so, ever onward

ball team almost look positively paltry. By the time I had finally headed toward my first, and last, sleep in my semi-private bedroom and bar in the little hotel in Fourteenth Street, it 's safe to say that the only vacant thing to be found in all Washington was the German embassy, which is still respected as an embassy, although empty — respected, one might say, a hodderned sight more than when it was n't empty.

And so, when I had the taxitiller turned to head me toward my bedroom bar or bar-room bed, whatever the term is, the sum total of my twenty-four-hour quest for a room was the exact knowledge that the late Count von Bernstorff's bed in the German embassy was vacant. Now, as I 've intimated, my bedroom bar had ceased functioning as a practical bar, having curled up into a little dry wad and perished on the eve of the previous November 1. When I told the night clerk that a day clerk, in exchange for one of those new two-dollar bills that fool one into thinking it 's a hundred-dollar note, had given me at least a promise that I might use one of the seven beds in the bar, the night clerk first offered his congratulations and then opened the hotel

safe and locked therein my watch and whatever change the Auto-To-Hire bandit chief had let me have back.

I had been leaning lightly against what I had mistaken for a black-walnut newel-post upon which, so I supposed, some one had thoughtlessly hung an admiral's dress uniform for the night. The clerk shook this entire upstanding arrangement into wakefulness while I still leaned against it. Sure enough (or, "Yes, indeed," as Washington would say it), it was a long, slim half portion of smoked ham, garbed in the uniform of a bell-boy. Him I followed warily down a semi-dark stairway, thence behind a furnace, or maybe it was in front of the furnace; and so, ever onward, past piles of baggage, crates of empty milk bottles, a door pathetically labeled, "Wine Room — No Admittance!"

Finally, within a dark interior, the bell-hop, now clearly planning to wake up, turned on a lone electric bulb, which was just above the only unoccupied bed in the bar-room. In addition to the swaggerest-sized mirror I had ever slept in front of, there were four little white iron beds sticking out from one wall, with the bed I was to sleep in and two more jutting into the room

from the opposite wall. And from the scents and sights and the all-penetrating tonal quality of snore sounds generally, I decided that either the room had been surreptitiously used as a bar until a very recent moment, or that all six of my unknown sleeping companions were a group of little pals who had just got in on a homebound excursion section — after an evening in the Monument City — of the Washington-Baltimore-Washington Night Liquor Local.

I had guessed right twice. The four in the beds across the room were gone beyond recall; I might have practised for an hour on my slip-horn, which I do in our apartment-house in New York nightly for at least an hour before turning in, and they never would have come out of their state of coma. But the two intellectuals on my side of the room evidently were putting up a better battle; in fact, one of them came to sufficiently to reach out for what remained of a quart bottle beside his bed, once he had glimpsed a stranger beginning to undress in his boudoir, and hastily tucked the glassware under his pillow. I got only a glimpse of the bottle, but I remember being impressed with the fact that the label of the bottle was decorated with either three

or five stars, and therefore probably was the property of at least a general, perhaps a ranking full admiral.

"They had n't ought ta done it!"

The sudden words, their very pathos, coming as they did from the dim corner occupied by the third bed on my side of the room, caused me to whirl round and peer sharply beyond the bed of my full admiral neighbor. It was my neighbor's brother intellectual who was speaking, gazing the while at a framed advertising lithograph on the dim far wall, a picture representing the late Christopher Columbus, all togged out in red tights and things and quaffing a man's size seidel of some sort of Columbus, Ohio, beer on the sands of San Salvador. Long the man gazed at the lithograph, and his head began to droop, and gently he started to weep. He was crying, he told us between sobs, because Christopher Columbus, that greatest of Amurican admirals, that dauntless genius among sea-captains, that mighty discoverer who had given a world to the world, had been sent back to Europe in chains.

"They had n't ought ta done it, Billy," he sobbed. "Billy, I leave it to you. As man to man, am I right or am I wrong?"

And the coal magnate climbed into the only vacant barber-chair

Then I knew I was in a bar-room. One may be led, blindfolded, into a boiler factory, a stamping-mill, a Broadway cabaret, or even a Democratic convention, and perhaps be unable to cry out while sightless the nature of the institution; but let one be led, sightless, into a gathering where one overhears the stock question, "I leave it to you. As man to man, am I right or am I wrong?" then one is n't possibly or probably in a bar-room. It *is* a bar-room. As best we could we soothed him. His sobs over the ill-treated Columbus grew fewer, and at last he lay asleep, great tear-drops gemming his lashes as he slept a sweet sleep as if of childhood, tousled locks spreading in care-free fashion over a tear-wet pillow just beneath another lithograph entitled, "Learning Baby to Dance."

There 's the great trouble with these bone-dry towns like Washington and Charleston and Bangor; a lot of the folks take to drink.

For a long time I lay awake in the basement darkness of the bedroom bar, thinking about the new wonders of this war-born Washington. Too long it had been merely the mecca of brides and grooms and job-hunters. To the whole people, for more than a century, it had been simply a

seat of government. And now in a day it had become, now and forever, not a mere interesting real-estate site upon which by chance had been piled enough freestone and marble to house the seat of government, but the capital of the whole nation.

And as I thought this wondrous new-born capital over, I began to feel a bit sorry that I had taken the wife with me to view it. The wife is so irreverent — and everything. She has a pesky habit of knowing what she likes and saying so out loud. Now I, like all the rest of the hundred million except the wife, believe that everybody running the war is a great statesman, general, executive, even if he is n't, for that 's patriotism; but the wife! Even the short glimpse she had had that day, before starting for Baltimore, of the new Washington at war had caused her to say things that made me blush for her. Her caustic comments on the most trifling things gave me deep distress. The weird and unauthorized fur collars fastened to the supposed-to-be uniform overcoats of the newly created officers of the very new army; glinting spurs attached to the boots of right-off-the-shelf lieutenants in the aviation service — she stormed

because the very best that the foremost poster draftsman of the whole country could turn out were lithographs which in thought and composition and general technic climbed to the sublime intellectual heights of a peaches-and-creamy show girl, garbed variously in the third-act clothes of Columbia or in the uniform of a blue-jacket, who seemed to be calling out coquettishly, above the gun-throbs and the groans of the greatest of world tragedies, "O Fellahs, Ain't You The Mean Things! Enlist To-day, Dearie!" Heavens! how I dreaded what she would say, once we had penetrated further and had begun to stumble into the tangles of red-tape, the petty party politics and a general scheme of war program teeming with all that unity so noticeable whenever a Kansas tornado hits a Saturday night performance of the circus.

It 's impossible to convince the wife that the truly patriotic should sit tight and say nothing when, to take an example, the Government insists upon saying, "Is this potential appointee the best Democrat (or Republican, as the case may be, and in former wars often was) to handle this big war job?" instead of simply asking, "Is he the best man to handle this big war job?"

Again and again I 've told the wife that the appointment of a given Democrat, instead of a given man, will at its worst merely result, say, in the unnecessary deaths, perhaps, of a few thousand young men in army camps or at the front. I try to show her that if nobody tries to right existing wrongs, the war may be prolonged, but in the meantime everybody will enjoy the sublime ethical satisfaction of knowing that he and all his compatriots have been intensely patriotic. "Pooh!" says the wife. "The trouble with you and the rest of the patriots of Bromidia is that you confuse criticism of a stuffed shirt in office with the office itself. If the people of New York impeach a governor and kick him out, how can such action be construed as even remotely a reflection upon the great office of Governor of New York?"

She 's hopeless. I don't go so far, of course, as to carry these ideas of patriotic silence into my wool-sponging business in lower Broadway; none of my fellow-patriots does, because that 's an entirely different matter, into which patriotism does n't enter. Or when I go to a ball-game at the Polo Grounds in New York with the rest of the fans on a Saturday afternoon. If I see

the shortstop repeatedly come close to losing the game by booting the ball all over the infield, I just climb right upon my hind legs back of third base and start the yell, "Take him out! Kill 'im!"

Doubtless, if the great managerial baseballist, Mr. John McGraw, should insist, day in and day out, upon retaining a player who persistently impeded the pennant progress of my beloved Giants by booting the ball from Saturday to Monday to Saturday, I 'd be ready to head a committee that would lock up Mr. McGraw forever and then throw the key away. Such extreme measures would undoubtedly bring down upon my head accusations of a disgraceful lack of loyalty toward the revered Giants, but the measures would go a long way toward winning the pennant.

The wife not only agrees with me in such matters as keeping office politics out of my woolsponging business, or in my outspoken criticism around the house when we get a cook that can't cook, in all these little ideas that have to do with efficiency in our own small systems of domestic, business, and social economics; but she also, alas! goes to the extreme of standing right up in

meeting and insisting that even the Government of the United States, from the President down, in war-time should cut out office politics, inefficiency, red-tape. And I tell her, everybody we know tells her (everybody, at least, among our patriotic friends who still speaks to her) that she 's no true American and ought to be ashamed of herself.

The important matter of the price of prunes in a Pennsylvania Avenue hotel restaurant, where we breakfasted after our all-night Auto-To-Hire search for a room, started the wife off on one of her distressingly unpatriotic tantrums. The hotel management, in a noble effort to help win the war by conserving food, charged the wife and me five cents a prune, five prunes in a saucer, at twenty-five cents per prune order, or fifty cents for our total of ten prunes. I was mortified to death the way she went on.

"Waiter," she said with cold finality, as if the poor waiter were to blame,—"Waiter, I have only this to say: You may report back to your chief, with my compliments, that I said in passing that even if Jess himself is the Willard that owns this hotel, he could n't *CARRY* fifty cents' worth of prunes!"

Now as I lay awake in the darkness of my bedroom bar and recalled all she had said at that breakfast-table, I tried to excuse her on the ground that a more or less sleepless night in the good ship Auto-To-Hire had caused her to go to irritating extremes. Whatever the cause, once the wife had disposed of the prune incident, she had rambled on, I remembered sleepily, with an unpatriotic harangue that was most obnoxious. The very head-lines on the Washington morning papers, lying face-up beside our plates, had seemed to goad her on. Why this? Why that? I recalled that I had blushed crimson while she raved.

"Shucks! Starting out to capture Berlin, and the whole darn country can't dish up enough unity of action in two weeks of effort to carry one quart of coal three quarters of a mile across the Hudson River to our flat. Oh, hush yourself! I could *see* the loaded coal-cars, I tell you, on the Jersey side of the river from the windows of pa's apartment on the drive. Lookit this newspaper head-line here: 'Mrs. Macgillicuddys-Reeks, Sinn Fein Leader, Received At White House.' Sickening! This is a fine time for the President to encourage German propa-

ganda by — o-o-o-o-oh, I — will — not — hush — up! This Sinn Fein person is violently pro-German; says so in effect from platforms; so are all her little group of co-workers. I 'd like to see her and her crowd ring the door-bell down at Oyster Bay, that 's all! They have the impudence to stand up in halls paid for out of German funds, admission free, in New York, Milwaukee, Chicago, everywhere, with a lot of Germans filling the front seats, and the whole crowd, even while our boys are fighting Germany in France, cheering wildly every time a speaker tells of German victories. Less than a month ago this same woman who was 'received at the White House' yesterday was the star speaker at a pro-German meeting in Terrace Garden, back home, where a country-woman of hers had girls pass the hat through the aisles for 'silver bullets,' as she called the collection, to be fired against our most powerful ally. They want our biggest ally crushed, smashed by Germany, which means that our American boys fighting beside the Tommies would have to be smashed, too; leaving us, with England gone, to fight it out with Germany and her allies single-handed, or be crushed and smashed ourselves."

The wife was going on strenuously, even for her. All that she said was true, for together we had gone, out of curiosity, to their meetings. Nevertheless, at the breakfast-table I had felt that it was frightful taste to criticize the President himself this way for making a formal fuss over the pro-German Sinn Fein leader. The wife, being a mere woman, did n't stop to think that the administration doubtless had had some excellent reason for its semi-official recognition of a dangerous enemy group which, backed by Germany, constantly seeks to cripple our greatest ally. I had managed, I remember, to wedge in a word to the effect that maybe the administration, in its wisdom, had merely received the Sinn Fein leader in order to proffer thereby a tiny bit of flattery to a more or less imaginary vote, which might help the party at the next congressional elections. The wife exploded.

"Votes! Ugh again! Flatter a crowd that jumped up with cheers — you were there and heard 'em, too — right in Carnegie Hall, weeks after we had gone to war, at the mere mention of German successes over England, and with a Justice of the New York Supreme Court, born in Middletown, New York,— greatest Irish

liberator ever born in Orange County, I call him, — presiding on the stage as chairman and never so much as reproving them. Let 'em work with Germany and start their uprisings at home if they think they 'd rather have a Prussian princeling as their lord lieutenant than a Britisher; that 's their own affair. Whether they know it or not, they 're striking the high spots in a German propaganda in America that was started when Prince Henry of Prussia came right here to plant a tree down at Mount Vernon, the prince sticking round long enough to plant a whole lot of other things also. The New York police had to chase the whole caboodle of 'em off their soapboxes in Herald Square months after we 'd gone to war. Now their German backers will chuckle out loud, and the whole troupe will start in with new courage, on the strength of the fact that the White House has made a fuss over their prima donna. If I were President, I 'd tell the whole impudent crew to skedaddle back to the country they refuse to live in, but which evidently means a whole lot more to them than America does — that, or to stop kicking up a sentimental uproar around here that does n't concern us and only impedes our own important war business.

"'Shortage In Motor-Trucks For Army.' Lookit that head-line! And you know as well as I do what happened in this very town of Washington when our Cousin Ed came down here months ago in the interest of the Mac Motor-Truck, or whatever the name of the firm is he's with now. Forgotten it? Well, you just listen. Our Ed went to the general, or whatever you go to here, and said his firm wanted to get the merits of their truck before the army authorities. And what did this general, or whoever the army truck man was, tell him? That the army could n't even consider Ed's truck. 'And why not?' our Ed asked, knowing that his truck admittedly was one of the best on the market. 'Because your truck is n't listed with us, and the department does n't permit firms to bid on truck contracts unless they're on our list.' 'And how does a firm get its truck listed, General?' 'Why,' this General said to our Ed, 'you have to take one of your stock trucks all the way down to the testing-ground in Texas and run it two thousand miles under certain specified conditions. Then if a test shows it's up to the requirements, your truck will be listed.' 'Easy, General,' our Ed says. 'My firm'll have as

many stock trucks as the army wants shipped right down to Texas for the try-out. We 'll run 'em to Texas under their own power, if you 'd prefer.' 'But that would n't help any toward getting your truck listed,' says the general to our Ed. 'And why not?' our Ed asked. 'Because,' answers the general, opening the door for our Ed to pass out,— and listen to this answer, dearie; it 's epic,—'Because —'"

"Because," I interrupted, "regardless of what Ed says, I happen to know there 's no shortage of motor trucks, so why add Ed's to the list? Right now the army 's all fed up with 'em."

But steadily she harangued, until I was driven almost — but not quite — to the point of calling her a pro-German carper. What was a mere sufficiency of army trucks in comparison to the sublime feeling (thus I thought as I dozed off into the beginning of my bar-bedroom slumbers) that had filled me, sitting there at the hotel breakfast-table, with the realization that it is far more beautifully patriotic to be without any trucks than to attempt, in the bold way the wife has of doing, unpatriotically to goad the Government to the embarrass-

ing position of buying trucks not needed. Of course, if I positively had to have such things as a lot of army trucks in my own business or close up my wool-sponging plant; and if this general, whoever he was, while working for our firm showed the door to anybody like the wife's Cousin Ed at a time when a sudden business rush had sent us hunting high and low for trucks; and if one of our managers knew what the general had done and did n't kick to the firm about it, well, in a private case like that I should n't do anything to the general and the manager, once I had learned the truth, but open our office window and drop both of them eight floors to the sidewalk of lower Broadway, praying in the meantime that they 'd both land on some vital anatomical spot and not on their heads. Applying such principles to a war-whirling Washington, however, is something else again. Be loyal. I 'm with the crowd on that slogan.

And just before I tumbled all the way into sleep I breathed a final prayer that we never would find a room and bath in Washington. Then, said I to myself, I can decently send the wife back home, leaving me free to dig, patrioti-

cally and alone, through the cuticle of war-time Washington, looking the whole works over in an unprejudiced way without the distraction and distress of the wife's daily harangue about things as they are. I 'd willingly sleep every night in the bar-room, sleep ten nights in a bar-room, if thereby I 'd get a chance to look things over uninterruptedly.

If the worst came to the worst, if it were possible to get rooms in Washington for the wife and me, then (so I firmly resolved, just before I lost consciousness) I 'd put in an entire day showing the wife one phase of Washington life of a dignity so sublime, so unselfishly patriotic, and at the same time so efficient and intellectually high-minded and awe-inspiring, that even she would come from the scene with eyes alight and a voice resonantly emotional as she spoke her acclaim. I 'd take her to see Congress!

CHAPTER III

WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE, BUT NOT A SINGLE DRINK

TAKE a fountain-pen, not any particular kind of fountain-pen, but just one of these ordinary first-class pens that leaks,— and thus equipped, one will find that in any dry and unfermented city such as Washington is in war-times the pen can be adapted to new uses which makes it one of the great life-saving engines of modern war.

The possibilities of the fountain-pen in these troublous days were demonstrated to me repeatedly during a long forenoon and afternoon in war-crowded Washington while I was awaiting the return of the wife from Baltimore. I arose after a night of more or less sleep in my pet abandoned bar-room in the Fourteenth Street hotel, and learned the astounding news that we could have a room and bath in that same hotel later in the day. An aged retired army officer,

it seems, who had lived in the hotel for years and had tried to stick it out even after Washington had gone dry, finally decided to give up the fight against frightful odds. The last of his own little private stock had begun to peter out, and he was in his ninety-first year and rheumatic, and therefore could not journey back and forth on the Washington-Baltimore Liquor Local to procure the stimulants so necessary to one of his years, and he was afraid of the Washington drinking water. In recent days his thoughts had turned often and oftener to the old homestead, which was in some place out on the rolling prairies within sight and sound of the quaint old church spires and distilleries of his native Peoria; and so at last he had decided to call an ambulance to the hotel door and start back to Illinois to grow to an old age of full, mellow beauty.

The room clerk had told me these details early, so that I might have first grab at the vacant room. While dressing I had decided that perhaps if a Washington room clerk were approached in the right way, he might be induced to accept a ten-buck bill as a slight token of esteem. In a wide range of travel over the country I never had un-

So I firmly resolved, before I lost consciousness

covered a hotel clerk who felt the need of a tip to urge him on to take an interest in his art, but perhaps, so I mused while dressing — perhaps the phenomenal conditions of a war-time Washington would cause a clerk to break the rule. Said conditions, or something, would and did not only in that hotel, but even back of the desks of some of Washington's hostelries that have a national reputation. There's a fact which prospective visitors may well remember while the big crush lasts.

Joyfully I set about the task of telephoning the wife the glad news that the venerable army officer was on his way to grow old beautifully among his old home distilleries. A simple job it seemed, this matter of merely entering a telephone-booth in the hotel lobby and asking to be put through to the Baltimore Y. W. C. A. and then telling the wife to hurry over to Washington. So is raising the *Titanic* simple. For almost half an hour I waited in the neighborhood of the hotel telephone-booths, all of which happened to be occupied, in the hope that at least one of the patient folk trying to get a local number would crack under the strain and quit. Then I remembered that one man in Washington re-

cently had hung up a record by spending almost three hours in a telephone-booth while trying to get the more or less well-known War Department. I strolled down the street and prevailed upon the hello girl in a Pennsylvania Avenue hotel to begin the preliminaries of trying to get the local exchange to call up Baltimore. And then I sauntered forth to see the town, first leaving my name and address and telephone number with the hello girl in case anything ever should come of the Baltimore call.

For, being temporarily a widower, here was a splendid chance, perhaps the only one I should have, to peer into the workings of the excise dry laws in the new war capital of the world. And so it was that I came upon the possibilities of the fountain-pen, its moral and mental and physical attributes as a war necessity.

He — the unconscious demonstrator of the versatility of the fountain-pen — was in a manner of speaking standing against the worn, but beautiful, mahogany of a bar-room celebrated for generations in Washington song and story. He was swaying gently, like a dew-gemmed lily nodding impersonally in the glorious zephyrs of a morning in the springtime. He was, in fact,

by way of being lightly stewed. A squat bottle that decorated the mahogany in front of him contained one of those non-alcoholic concoctions which looks like beer, smells like beer, and tastes like beer, but of which it has been truly said that, once a thirsty soul has tucked even a quart or two of it within him, it "lacks the authority." It is an amber mixture wearing a collar of foam and called "Peevo" or some such name.

At a far end of what for generations had been a practical bar now stood dreamily a weighty bartender who seemed to have a great secret sorrow, his back to the myriad conglomeration of ancient prints, dingy medals, and badges of historic interest that littered the wall, dusty relics of great Washingtonians, all of a cobwebby dryness in keeping with the total absence of humidity that prevailed. His head was bowed, and his mind was back, back, back amid the memories of the great days that were. With the exception of the swaying fountain-pen demonstrator, there was no human impediment in a path leading from the street door to any point along the bar, whereas the last time I had been in that particularly historic place I had been compelled to

bat my way through a transient population of Washington which had come to town to see the first inauguration of President Wilson. And on that previous visit, so I now recalled, even after I had kicked and punched a passage all the way from the street curb indoors to the mahogany and brass foot-rail, this same bartender had utterly ignored my simple order, doubtless because we had n't been properly introduced. But now! Well, now he all but kissed me; and in a manner that was pathos itself he arranged most temptingly his little stock of Peevo and Wishee-Washo and the rest of the fair, but false, bottled goods which a theoretically dry Washington now permits the totally dry bar-rooms to sell. On the bar beside his pathetic little stock he placed bottles of catsup, Worcestershire sauce, paprika, black pepper, horse-radish, rock salt, vinegar, and the other ingredients which a desperate Washington has been known to mix together of late into a sort of non-explosive TNT and dump into a glass of Wishee-Washo to give the beverage some semblance of the old-time kick.

I had selected a bottle of the Wishee-Washo, which wholly lacked authority, and was idly sipping the amber inanity when the gentleman

of the fountain-pen or pens began to make a fuss over me. Our friendship took a long leap forward as he confided to me that once upon a time, back in the days of the Hudson-Fulton celebration in New York, he had spent almost a whole week in my home town of Manhattan, during the course of which, believe it or not, he had actually been in the same street, Broadway, where my wool-sponging business is located.

"Well, well, well, it's a small world, after all!" I cried in amazement. I had seized for quotation upon the best line in Charles Hanson Towne's "Ain't Nature Wonderful" because of its appropriateness, intoning it with as much enthusiasm as I might have done were the lines my own instead of Mr. Towne's. It was quite evident that the felicity of the line had impressed my new friend, for in the midst of his pendulum-like swayings back and forth he watched his chance until one of his sways brought his lips close to my ear. And all this time, remember, I was certain that the beverage he was quaffing was non-alcoholic. Thereupon he buttonholed me with the only hand he had left which was not occupied with a tight grip on the bar, and he whispered to me to come to the farthest end of

the bar, where the sadly ruminating barkeep' could not hear him. He opened his coat then cautiously.

Jutting up row on row from every waistcoat pocket were countless fountain-pens. From cravat to belt-line he looked like a pipe-organ. Each of the pens, I noticed, was fitted out with one of those little nickel contrivances which, when moved in one direction, sucks up enough ink immediately to fill the barrel of the pen, or, when moved the other way, almost instantly causes all the ink in the barrel to spurt back into the ink-bottle.

"There 's no kick in this Peevo stuff, is there, Friend?" he whispered. "Friend, I leave it to you, as man to man, am I right or am I wrong? Now gimme little 'tention. You pour out your glass of Peevo or Wishee-Washo — *so;* then you take out man's sized fountain-pen and work metal thingamajig *so,* and out squirts whole pen-ful of lovely pure alcohol into glass of Peevo. What 's result, Friend? Result 's a glass of the brew, real stuff, that 's got more kick in it than all stuff Mr. Schlitz, Pabst, Lemp, 'n' Busch could cook up working together. As man to man, am I right or am I wrong?"

He was right. For a long time we talked sadly of the mighty changes brought about by the new order of things; of the vacuity of the corner bar of the Ebbitt, where the army and navy forever had been wont to fight all the battles of all history across the mahogany, but now, alas! given over to rows of pop bottles and altogether as festive and riotous as the octogenarian reading-room of the Century Club in New York on a rainy Tuesday morning; of the once delectable Shoomaker's, down in "the avenue," where pyramids of empty old wine-cases, kegs, barrels, brave with printed legions of one-time contents, but now a mass of lies, lies, lies, still line the walls — kegs of air as useful as discarded peanut-husks, and as tempting, but persisting in littering the floor of the ex-bar in a shameless display that but adds insult to injury. A sorrow's crown of sorrows, fond mem'ries bring to light, — gone are the days,— banquet-hall deserted! In the midst of life we are in drought.

Out of my reveries I was started by the voice of my friend of the fountain-pens. He was speaking in tones thick with emotion.

"Thazza las' penful!" Carefully and thoughtfully he was planning to turn himself a

shade more than ninety degrees and face the street door a few feet away. Without the aid of a rudder he made the distance, but as he reached for the knob he paused and pressed his brow against the door-post, and his frame began to shake with sobs. "Injustice!" he apostrophized. "Nuthin' so maddening's injustice. Betcha million dollars first thing I get home she'll say I been drinking!" Then he crashed out.

It is well that a wise administration of district excise matters has seen to it that (a) one must have a prescription signed by a physician living in Washington before any druggist in the capital will so much as consider a request for a bit of alcohol, and (b) that one cannot get the grain alcohol even then, owing to the fact that the internal revenue folk, for months following the lowering of the Washington lid, held up the delivery of alcohol to the druggists. I know these things to be true, because once I had learned from my friend of the fountain-pens how far even one fountain-pen could go toward changing the entire career of a glass of Wishee-Washo, I rushed off to the nearest drug-shop and tried to trap the druggist into selling me a gallon or so

of grain alcohol. I just wanted to trap one of these smart Aleck druggist chaps, that 's all, and then see to it that the scoundrel was punished to the full extent of the law. But, so help me, from one end of the town to the other I could n't find a doggoned, dodgasted druggist who would sell me enough to fill one pen, even though I pleaded for almost an hour with one druggist who I thought was a friend of mine, who was until he refused to do me even so slight a favor as to sell me a stingy little penful.

From time to time between visits to the drug-shops I dropped in to ask the hotel hello girl occasionally whether or not the Washington telephone exchange persons had yet seen their way clear to take up the matter of getting the wife to come to a Baltimore end of the wire. On one of these visits, made shortly after the noon hour, I received authoritative information that the matter certainly would be taken up by the day shift of operators during the afternoon, or by the night shift at the latest. Thus reassured, I wandered forth again to look into the drink evil as influenced by the prohibition law. Just for my own satisfaction I wanted to learn at first hand whether the new excise law in Washington

was as effective, say, as I had found the same sort of law to be when, one hot and thirst-provoking day the summer before, I had investigated thoroughly the working of the dry law in the prohibition town of Bangor, Maine. It was just as effective.

I confess that I had arrived in Washington fearful that my old friend and boon companion of other days, the Rev. Billy Sunday, who had come to the capital just ahead of me to save it, would suffer the embarrassment of finding Washington so free of hard liquor that his work would be half done before he could even start in to do it himself. Knowing Bill as I do, I grieved to think that he would have to suffer the humiliation of facing great throngs already largely reformed. A fine situation that for Bill to find himself in! And there were other things that troubled me, too, deplorable results which it seemed to me would inevitably float in the water wake of the district's new prohibition measures. There was the matter, for instance, of the sudden compulsory lack of elbow exercise among the officers of the Army and Navy Club and of the mighty statesmen who gather in the one-time wet-goods department of the Metropolitan Club.

The sudden surcease of cocktails, I feared, would cause the serious muscular atrophy of arms right and left, especially of good right arms now so much needed to win the war. Also, how about the social affairs that are a necessary part of a national capital's interrelations with the ordained representatives of the other peoples of the world? Had the new dry state of affairs brought Washington social happenings to the drab dreariness of the grape juice carousals which once held sway every time William Jennings Bryan invited all the ambassadorial boys and girls to gather round his merry board to carry on and raise the deuce generally?

A short investigation showed that many of my fears were groundless. For one thing, I was relieved to find on page 59 of the admirable "Report of Superintendent of Police," which Chief of Po-lice Raymond W. Pullman kindly let me have, that whereas only thirty-four citizens had fallen down-stairs (see statistics headed, "Casualties — Accidents") throughout the whole District during the entire dry year of 1916, there were forty-seven who tumbled down-stairs following the enforcement of the general order of 1917 that a man's place to drink is in the home.

How faithfully and patriotically an outwardly dry Washington is living up to the letter as well as the spirit of an indoor and inwardly wet law may be seen by glancing, on the same page of the major's report, at the line of statistical figures headed, "Accidents — Street Falls." Here one learns that 117 Washingtonians fell flat on the street and hurt themselves during the wet spell, whereas, following the ruling that every one must do one's falling down in one's home circle, there were only 47 who hit the out-door street pavements forcibly enough to need police help after the al fresco dryness set in.

Major Pullman sees fit to point with pride to the fact that although there were all of 1704 Districtites who had to be bundled into the hurry-up police-wagon during the soggy months of November and December of 1916, there were only 507 drunk and dressed-up gentlemen dragged before the local calif throughout the corresponding dry months of 1917. But does the major see fit to explain the patent fact that one of his cops may not enter citizens' houses promiscuously to see what is happening round the dining-room buffet? The major does not. Also it would be interesting to hear some explanation

from Major Pullman regarding a final item on his list of "Accidents." The major's statisticians say that during 1916, or before we went to war, there were 55 Washingtonians "overcome by gas," whereas the police report says that in 1917, regardless of the arrival of more crates of orators in Washington than even the capital ever dreamed existed, the escaping gas prostrated only 45 innocent bystanders, supposing there are any bystanders round Washington in these days who are innocent. Before closing the major's meaty report, it is worth noting that the order which changed America's, the world's, greatest indoor-outdoor sport entirely, so far as Washington is concerned, into an indoor recreation, also has had a pronounced effect upon the dusky belt that stretches like a ribbon of black velvet along the water-front wharves. For in the matter of the major's list headed, "ASSAULTS — In The Streets," one learns that in the last days of the soggy season 207 swarthy gentlemen (see subtitle, "Assaults with Razors") settled 207 al fresco arguments with the best beloved Afro-American weapon, whereas only 124 street lyceum debates were brought to a close with razors during the corresponding months that

dryly wound up the silly old year of 1917.

A chief difficulty with the excise law which a paternal Congress and commissioners wished upon Washington is that the law itself is a bit befuddled. About the only section in the statute which is perfectly clear even to the police is the fact that one can't buy a drink. Not even in clubs can one get so much as a bottle of beer. Not even, even, even, even, even in the National Press Club! In fact, the saddest sight to me of the whole world war of sorrows presented itself one evening in the Press Club a few months after Washington had been blotted dry. It was merely the solemnity of a tableau in which a ruddy-faced young Congressman, his complexion indicating that it was beginning to fade white again in spots where a carefully acquired indoor tan was bleaching off, sat listlessly splitting a bottle of Peevo or Blabblo or some such kickless concoction with a girthy newspaper correspondent throughout a terrifically thrilling game of dominoes. What the two were doing out of Baltimore so late I cannot explain. The congressman hailed from the arid regions of Maine, the newspaper man from sun-parched South Carolina; therefore even their own fond parents

back in their native States had no way of fixing them up a little bottled snack of the old-time home cheeriness and easing it along to their boys. Already the representative and the reporter were beginning to pick at the covers. Then, toward nine o'clock at night, the congressman in wan tones asked the correspondent if he wished the thrill of a final game of dominoes. For a moment the newspaper man mused dreamily, but of a sudden his face lighted with the fires of inspiration.

"Sure!" he cried, alertly seizing his hat and coat and summoning an attendant to call an Auto-To-Hire. "Let 's play it on the next train to Baltimore." And they went out into the night.

The reassuring figures in Major Pullman's report concerning the steady increase in the number of Washingtonians who fall down indoors are undoubtedly accurate. In fact, the statistics were backed up recently in a national publication, published, I believe, in Chicago, and called the *Policeman's Monthly,* in an article that was beautifully set off with a "half-tone" frontispiece entitled, "Washington Police Sergeant Resuscitating a Man Overcome by Water."

Looking at the subject from even its gloomiest side, undoubtedly there was a sufficient amount of encouragement in Major Pullman's lists of figures to indicate that, after all, there was still a lot of unregenerated raw material lying loose round the capital, if it could only be coaxed from the buffet into the outdoors, for Billy Sunday to work upon. Besides, if everything else failed Billy, always at hand was the wicked, shameless young Uncle Joe Cannon, who still smokes two cigars at a time, lighting them ends on ends, who still says damn and everything, even for publication, still does dance steps at all unholy hours in the now solemn lounging-room of the National Press Club, altogether dissipating his youth in a manner so shocking that the regeneration of Uncle Joe Cannon alone would necessitate the building of a yellow-pine tabernacle covering a city square and the concentrated efforts of Billy Sunday's entire repertory of sermons and all of Homer Rodeheaver's slip-horn hymns combined. A hard citizen is Uncle Joe, — he admits it,— but just so sure as there is a dawning sun to light the homebound path of such sun-dodging hawks of night, just so sure will the wicked prodigality with which the Hon. Joe

Cannon wastes his best days get him in time, and get him good.

Now, as to the matter of the atrophy of the good right arms of the distinguished admirals, generals, and statesmen, here again a kindly providence that takes care of fools, drunken men, and the United States of America has stepped in with a substitute arm exercise. All day, every day since war began, the right arms of the generals, admirals, and colonels are working overtime in the calisthenics of the military salute. One cannot walk two consecutive feet in a war-time Washington, through the streets, in hotel lobbies, or the clubs, without stepping upon salutable military folk, who range in rank from the more or less soldierly looking Private Jeb Hooper of Bird-In-Hand, Pennsylvania, all the way up to the ecstatic vision of a group of ranking British artillery officers, seated in the luncheon jam at the Shoreham and all dressed up like a broken arm. That copy of Baedeker from which the wife, on our trip from New York to Washington, had dug up much accurate information about a national capital of the vintage of 1908 observes that the population of the District "includes about 40,000 army and navy

officers." He 's a great little describer, is Baedeker, but meticulous. Why, in Washington today there are seemingly fully that many brand-new little second lieutenants running loose on the range, all rigged out in the crinkly new uniforms so recently off the shop shelves that an irreverent Washington has descended to grouping the new young army generically as "the Sears-Roebucks." And even if there was no occasion for this chronic saluting exercises among aged army and navy elbows, the war-time practice of always wearing one's uniform permits one also to carry a pair of field-glasses these days — at least to carry the case — without causing embarrassing comment; and field-glass cases come in half-pint, pint, quart, and even magnum sizes. Then as to elbow exercises among the mighty statesmen who, so I had foolishly feared, were in danger of atrophy of the biceps when their pet café counters had ceased to function, all one has to do in these days to dispel such idle fears is to glance into the Senate or the House and see the windmill arms swing wildly and always as the great men daily take up their task of saving the nation. One does not even have to go into the Capitol to be reassured; all one has to do is to

stand out on a curbstone of Capitol Hill and lean against the noise as the patriots bang their oratorical fists on their desks while in the throes of the great indoor sport of trying to bat in the .350 class of the Patriotic League.

Finally, as regards the absence of liquid tongue-looseners and the effect of the lack of them upon social functions, it is only fair to state that as a usual thing a social affair in Washington is not nearly so dry as, to take a somewhat extreme example for comparison, the Great American Desert. Washington at war has suffered a tapering off on the social side, of course. Great state dinners have been discontinued; the "formal" dinner or dinner dance in the home has almost quite perished, and there is a consequent weeping and wailing among gown-builders and hair-wavers who are beginning to feel the pangs of dwindling bank-account. The functions nowadays run largely to theater-parties, a fashion for box-parties probably having been set by a President who still makes a practice of going to the theater at least once or twice a week.

Nevertheless, the dining-rooms along Connecticut and Massachusetts avenues have n't been entirely scrapped, and since November 1,

1917, acceptances are much more easily obtained. Not so many months ago a Washington host or hostess often had difficulty in mobilizing enough male eligibles between the social draft ages of twenty and sixty to make a mess. The town was fed up on the social side. But to-day let the word go forth that a potential host has a well-stocked cellar of liquid lightning,— and usually he has,— and there will be a stampede of old and young folk carrying lightning-rods and all praying aloud to be struck. They may even appear in business suits, a simplified war capital for the first time in its history having recently ruled that spiked-tailed coats and the rest of the sartorial fluffs and feathers are not absolutely necessary.

And so it still happens that a host or hostess will stand right up and say, "Let's give a party!" whereupon a new Washington that came into being on that first black November day begins to whisper delicately, "Do they serve the hard stuff in that house?" And if the answer is, "You betcha they do," that particular host is certain of a big mail filled with positive replies to his R. S. V. P.'s, and on the night of

the great day the line forms in Connecticut Avenue, right resting on Massachusetts, and extends far off into the dry night air.

All these and many more bits of sociological, ethical, political, and scientific data of a like international importance I came upon while awaiting official word that the telephone exchange had caught up with itself sufficiently to consider the preliminaries of taking some action on my telephone call to Baltimore. By mid-afternoon, or within almost as few hours as it takes to telephone the corner spaghetti dealer on a government-owned line in Europe, I had begun to get in touch telephonically with the wife, and had broken to her the glad news about the venerable retired army officer who had gone away to grow old beautifully amid the rye-fields and lovely old distilleries in and around his native Peoria.

Would it not be jolly — thus the wife over the telephone from Baltimore — to engage a car and motor over to Washington? It would not, I told her. Nowadays, as I hastened to point out to her, the Old Pike which connects Baltimore and Washington is so cluttered up with broken bot-

tles that no rubber shoe or inner tube can live the length of a city square upon that forty-odd mile stretch of ground glass. That 's the road over which John Wilkes Booth once fled to temporary safety, but Booth used a horse. If he had tried to skedaddle along it in an automobile while it is in its present condition, John's life doubtless would have lasted just twelve days less than it did. It is an open question, when one adds up the weekly cost of the high-priced inner tubes and tires destroyed along the Old Pike in these days, whether the patriots who dried up the capital showed war-time wisdom in their honorable efforts to save the less costly inner tubing of humans from becoming pickled. Maybe yes, maybe no. Rubber is scarce, but one always can get people.

"Stick to the steam-cars, old dear," was my advice to the wife over the telephone. Also I was about to add something to the general effect that if the wife did happen to decide to bring a small flask of Baltimore's leading war export with her in her hand-bag, she had better keep an eye out for Major Pullman's souse sleuths as the train crept into Washington. However, the wife being the wife, I decided the advice would

be superfluous. Small chance! Smallest chance that the wife would remember that the only thing standing between us and a sudden chill or something was my little, old, black traveling-bag. That was now locked up and still partly intact in the closet of our new room in the Fourteenth Street hotel, but it was sadly dwindling; so many persons settle in Washington in these days from so many places that no visitor can walk two squares without meeting a parched friend from the old home town, especially if one gets there with a little, old, black traveling-bag. It 's a difficult thing to get farther than two squares, three at the most, from one's hotel room. One is always meeting up with somebody and being compelled to turn right round and bring the friend back to the hotel room and telephone down to the desk for a bit of cracked ice. Life is just one friend after another.

But there was n't a chance of help from the wife. And, supposing the impossible, if she did get in a little medicinal stock of liquid munitions and stow it away in her hand-bag, I 'd bet the whole British war loan against a high-wheel bicycle that Major Pullman's sleuths, down at the Union station, would grab that hand-bag

first. I know my own luck. The major does n't raid the incoming railway-cars often for smuggled life-saving liquids, even though the new law at least is clear to the length of saying that no one must bring or have shipped into the District any of the bottled laughter of the peasant girls of Peoria or Milwaukee unless a written or printed notice on the outside of the hand-bag or packing-case states the nature of the contents. Throughout all the stretch of 1917 that was arid the sleuths arrested and seized the hand luggage of only fifty-eight incoming travelers from Baltimore, and there was n't a woman in the round-up. But if the wife had ever tried it — well, I know my luck. Besides, one could n't ask a lady, even one's own wife, ostentatiously to label the façade of her hand-bag with a legend running, "This bag is full to the gills." But supposing I had dared to suggest such a thing, and supposing the wife had even obeyed the label law to the last letter, it 's a hundred to one shot that some Washington sleuth would have got the hand-bag before I did. I know my luck all right, all right.

"Major," I asked the efficient young police boss of Washington, "is n't it a bit ticklish to ar-

From every waistcoat pocket were countless fountain pens

rest a new arrival and open his baggage on mere suspicion?"

"Pooh!" cried the major. "It's a cinch to tell if a man comes from Baltimore."

Just how the major's sleuths attempt to dam the rapidly rising flood which steadily liquidates into Washington via the cross-country electric trolley-line known as the Washington, Baltimore & Annapolis cannot here be clearly stated. From all accounts the sleuths have to content themselves merely with standing round and just dam'ing it. The directors of this W. B. & A. line include Baltimorians who are among the nation's stanchest advocates of any prohibition measures that are confined to Washington. Not so long ago that same W. B. & A. trolley-line was earning in the neighborhood of one half of one per cent; and skating on ice so thin that some of the unbloated bondholders were in a cold sweat lest they break through. Their stock had been a drag on the market round Baltimore and Cleveland, sticking in the lower regions of six. Then war and its horrors burst upon the stockholders. Washington went dry. Baltimore stayed wet. Washington began to take a new interest in Baltimore. Dryly of a morning, any morning.

Washington began to jump aboard the W. B. & A. cars, market-baskets and demijohns under arm. Homeward that night sloshed Washington again, still via the W. B. & A. The electric line's earnings staggered from about one half of one per cent. headlong to one, two, six, sixteen per cent. Instead of sticking around six, the stock burst from its cell with a terrible yell, until, by the time the lid had been completely nailed down upon Washington, the stock was careening toward twenty. Two months later — in January, 1918 — it was singing raucously and hitting the high spots all the way up to 28½. And at last accounts it was yelling with increasing abandon as it lurched onward and ever upward, and butting blue-dotted pink elephants off the tracks so that more and more cars could whiz by. Cars! All the world and its relatives did n't have on sale new cars enough to handle the business. Besides, to have new cars built would cost about three times as much as the same cars could have been turned out for just before the world went mad. But so great was the demand for more rolling stock on the cross-country electric line that a purchasing agent of the W. B. & A. scouted high and low until finally,

hundreds of miles away in the yards of the Long Island Railroad Company, he stumbled upon fifty-four old cars that the Long Island line had as good as scrapped. At only a slight cost for refitting them the old cars would be just the thing for interurban traffic. Wherefore the W. B. & A. snatched up the fifty-four cars at less than $350 apiece, and before the ancient rolling stock had been delivered to its new owners the W. B. & A. bargain-sale purchasers could have sold fifteen of the cars for $20,000, thus retaining thirty-nine "new" cars which had cost them less than nothing.

And still there are fat-headed reform folk who insist that booze is bad for business!

But despite the fast-flying electric-line whizzers and the Rumhound Unlimited, the Cannon High-Ball Express, the many sections of the Liquor Local, and the rest of the steam, electric, and gasolene traction between the dry belt and the wet, the fact remains that it is a weighty problem to find a spot in Washington where one will be struck by even a casual flash of liquid lightning. Even if one owns a flivver of the Tin Lizzie model — and everybody in the capital nowadays does — which one is n't afraid to sub-

mit to the terrors of the bottle-strewn old pike, there 's the annoyance of having to buy a District of Columbia automobile license as well as a Maryland license number for Lizzie before one can head eastward over the Pennsylvania Avenue bridge in the general direction of Baltimore and booze, and both licenses are sold at a price which would cause a New York or Chicago motorist deep, perhaps fatal, distress. The District of Columbia permits a driver owning a license issued by any State in the Union except Maryland to come and go about the capital as he pleases without taking out a district license. The State of Maryland gives the right of way to all licenses of the various States, but refuses to admit a District car unless the skipper of the car also sports a Maryland license even a flivver length inside the State. This condition is the outcome of an old, old battle between the Maryland and the District of Columbia automobile authorities, and now in these dryish days it is breaking the brave, but thirst-ridden, souls and hearts of some of nature's noblest gentlemen.

Then it must be remembered that although all of Washington may visit Baltimore some of the time, and some of Washington may hang round

Baltimore all the time, all of Washington cannot be in Baltimore all the time. Washington's bankers, brokers, teamsters, statesmen, and motormen have enough work to do in these days to require their presence in their own bailiwick at least a part of every week. Wherefore Major Pullman points with pride to the fact that in the two months of outdoor dry weather of 1917 there was a decrease of seventy per cent. in squiffiness and the general attendant cussedness which causes ossified gentlemen to begin the day by saying, "Good morning, Judge." Even Congressmen have to stay in Washington a bit and do some congressing, and no more can they put their feet on the brass rail in or around the Capitol. Until a day some years ago — it was during the czardom of the Tom Reed dynasty — a thirsty statesman could submerge into the hard stuff that liquidated the House restaurant and, right under the Capitol roof, stay submerged and never come up for air again until the end of the session if he so desired. And if he did seek the surface, he could immediately take a high dive again to the depths of the alcohol floods in the restaurant under the Senate section. But in the Reed régime the House closed its bar, knowing that

there was just as good stuff to be had, maybe better, in the other restaurant on the Senate side. And just for that the Senate, two or three sessions later, locked up their bar and hid the key, laughing heartily the while at the splendid joke they were playing on the House. The next instant the Senate, like the House, was wondering whether or not the whole proceeding was such an all-fired joke after all. Right away the patriots began to spill out of both wings of the Capitol, and they raced across the lawns and over the asphalt and never stopped running until they had fetched up at Engel's or at one of several hotel bars, or at all several eventually, in the Capitol Hill neighborhood. But in time Engel's was torn down, and with the fearsome crash that landed upon Washington in the black November of 1917 not even a congressman from the State of Maine could find a place to get a dram. And if a Maine man can't find a dram, it 's because there ain't no such animal. I remember one night while waiting between trains in Bangor. just while waiting between trains, I started out with a Bangor policeman as guide to —

But one can't sit round a Washington hotel

room in the gathering dusk of a late winter afternoon and recount the horrors of even one night in bone-dry Bangor, can't even uncork the general outline of so sad and soggy a tale; not if the raconteur ever expects to get down to the Union Station in time to greet a wife arriving on a section of the Baltimore-Washington Liquor Local scheduled to reach Washington in time to pick up its regular six o'clock eastbound load.

CHAPTER IV

"ALL 'S RIOTOUS ALONG THE POTOMAC!"

"SAY, young fellow," I said to myself as I hurried through the gathering gloom to meet the wife, "do you know something?" "What?" I asked myself, pausing for a moment in my flight. "Just this," I replied. "You 're going to get down to the Union Station just in time to get smothered in the six o'clock rush hour on the way back to the hotel. What do you know about that, huh?" "Oh, ding!" was all I could say, and I hurried on.

And, sure enough, the wife came through the Union Station gate and on to the concourse just in time to miss the last Auto-To-Hire in line. Wherefore nothing remained for us to do but to try to work through a jam around the trolley-tracks and await a chance to dynamite an opening into the heart of the mass play of strap-hangers.

Every super-crowded car that came along the

trolley-tracks bit off a piece of the large, round edge of the particular mob of which we, the wife and I, were a part. There were other mobs scattered along the pavement in front of the station, each of the separate crowds hopeful, like our own private mob, that along would come a car that did n't bulge outward. And as in time we moved an inch to the step from the sidewalk to a point close to the car-tracks I saw that girthy men on the fore line of standees were losing coat-buttons every time a slow-moving trolley-car got under way and slid its length against the front elevations of our vanguard. I feared for what might happen when the wife, who was hopelessly wedged in front of me, made that front line.

"Dearie," I cried in sudden alarm, "you did n't by any chance bring anything from Baltimore that — you have n't anything in your hand-bag that 's breakable? If you have, no glassware ever will withstand the —"

"No; there 's no glassware from Baltimore in my bag," snapped the wife directly into the ear of the man wedged in front of her, the closeness of the jam making it impossible for her to turn her head and address me personally. "I 'd look pretty, would n't I, going on such a disreputable

shopping expedition in Baltimore! Besides, as I've told you before, the law is the law. We must obey it."

And so we stood there in silence a long, long time after that. It didn't make happier my musings when I recalled that at least we might have escaped the terrors of the rush-hour jam if the local telephone company had only taken a few less hours to put my telephone call through to Baltimore. In time we worked at least close enough to the passing trolley-cars to enable me to take a bit of the curse off the delay by reading the frieze of advertisements that stretched along the inside of the cars just above the heads of the strap-hangers. But even the car advertisements wouldn't let me forget the Washington telephone service, for on one of the cards in a passing car was a printed appeal, phrased patriotically, which said in effect that now was the time for all good girls to come to the aid of the telephone company to do their bit by accepting jobs as hello-ladies.

Maybe the telephone company had a lurking notion that if such an appeal were plastered all over the street-cars the public would stop grumbling and in patriotic fashion convince itself that

the whole frazzled condition of the service was due to war-time labor shortage. Maybe the company had that thought in mind; I don't know. But I did reflect, as we waited our chance to board a car, that if ever a corporation approached a big business increase with a sour equipment with which to try to handle the new rush, it was that same local exchange. Like our army and navy departments, the Washington telephone persons for years had mooched and browsed and stumbled along with an equipment that was the last word in unpreparedness, while cuss words arose from the Anacostia to Georgetown and back again as subscribers and casual users of the telephone called for numbers that rarely came.

Then when the present big noise did begin to detonate among a lot of official and civil nappers, the telephone company, quite as much as the newly aroused governmental departments, ran up against a shiftlessness among minor employees that is the outgrowth of a condition which has been peculiar to Washington since the city was young. For even the mightiest military-political-social-commercial upheaval of history has not yet been able to down altogether

one phase of salaried service which for generations had been carefully fostered in the City of Salaries. Throughout so many years that they are uncountable Washington has been looked upon by its largest section of salaried folk, the government clerks, as a personal sort of very rich and easy-going old Uncle Samuel, to whom the governmental employee bears the relation of an impecunious niece or nephew that Unk should support "until something better turns up." There you have it, that until-something-better-turns-up attitude of rich old Unk's poor relatives, who look to him for a fair income, or even fairer than that, and only enough work to satisfy the conscience. There was a period when the office hours of a clerk in the Pension Office, in the War, State, Patent, any department, ran from the time the youthful patriot decided to get to his desk round mid-forenoon until he allowed that he 'd put on his hat and go home, which was usually a bit after mid-afternoon. Then into the capital one day came a middle-aged ex-sheriff from Buffalo named G. Cleveland, and one of the first things ex-Sheriff Cleveland did, after selecting a White House room with southern exposure, was to start right in to hurt the tenderly nur-

tured feelings of a large part of the Government's official younger set by suggesting that the only way to be on the job was to be on the job. The former Sheriff of Buffalo did n't quite go to the extreme of instituting in Washington the national pastime of punching the time-clock — a pastime common enough in all the nation's business houses except in the country's own main works at Washington; but Mr. Cleveland did crack the whip with sufficient force to cause an instant increase in the sale of ninety-eight-cent alarm-clocks all over the boarding-house belt of the capital.

Brute! *Simon Legree!* The wails of injured innocence almost drowned out the grand municipal buzzing of the alarm-clocks. That growling and grumbling of resentment against the curse of being compelled to do at least some labor in return for one's salary continued on through subsequent years of peace, and right on up to the first war summer, and beyond. One might say that the plaintive protest against actual work never really reached its high C until the first summer of the country's participation in a world war. Never before in a century of summers had Washington been compelled to sweat its brow

during the hot months until the riotous summer of 1917 ricochetted into town. Not only the much abused government "workers," but the elevator-boys, waiters, the shop clerks in F Street, even the barkeeps who looked gloomily toward the fast-approaching surcease of the souse, all Washington's permanent force of kid-glove hired hands bitterly resented the indignity of suddenly being called upon to do almost as much work in a day as any of the business folk in lower Manhattan does in an average morning. And just as the Down-trod and Oppressed had begun, toward the end of the hot months, to grow somewhat accustomed to working even in summer, they began to realize that their labors were piling up in direct ratio to the progress and duration of the World War; and so they started in upon an autumn and winter of discontent. They had just about decided to rouse themselves almost into wide awakeness — we are considering the chronic Washington employee now, not the influx of men and women who came to town to do war work — and to stay almost awake, when into their hands fell more and more and more, the downpour increasing daily, darn old war business to take care of. And with the increase in

work came also discontent among lady and gentlemen laborers in the governmental and commercial vineyards who had been fairly happy in their jobs until they heard exaggerated tales of the larger financial opportunities in the offices of mushroom growth which war conditions had brought about.

Honest, Maggie, I hope t' die if this old switch-board ain't drivin' me to a livin' corpse. Cripes, but this job sure is gettin' somethin' fierce! And here we set, Maggie, lettin' 'em treat us like we was dirt under their feet instead of — Yes, sir. I 've told you twicet already, sir, I kinnot get you that numbah, being as the line is busy. Listen, Maggie! Ain't we the dumb things lettin' 'em treat us like we was dirt under their feet instead of pickin' off easy jobs like Bertha Higgins and Tillie Hooper and all them girls, over in the Red Cross and war places like that, for twicet as much as they got here. Listen, Maggie. Last Sunday eve I seen Bertha with a swell fellah at Poli's, and did n't she have on a new fox set that was simply — Don't you dast swear over the wire at me, sir! Ain't I givin' *all* my whole day tryin' to get your pahty? I don't care who you are; that don't give a

gelmun absolutely no right to forget he 's a gelmun and try to get new with me. Listen, Maggie. He says, "I 'll reeport you to the mangmunt and have you discharged!" Ain't that a riot? I should be annoyed with worryin' about this old job! And listen. All Bertha Higgins did was to go to a night course in the business collidge every eve for a few weeks after finishin' up her work here every day. Of course her workin' in the business collidge so late was the reason she was always asleep at the switch here, like all them other girls that 's goin' t' night collidge; but look how it 's bettered them in life! And listen. Your pahty does not answah, sir. Listen, Maggie. That 's what I 'm goin' t' do. I 'm goin' to the business collidge just long enough t' grab off one of these regular swell jobs lyin' loose all over this burg since the war started. I kinnot stand this work no longer and live, Maggie. And so I 'm goin' t' study for a stenographer or somethin', and just stall along daytimes on this telephone job, like Bertha Higgins and all them girls, until they 've learned me enough at the collidge to land somethin' big.

And there you are. Back in the dear dead days of peace silly old Unk's nephews meandered

along as government clerks during a few sunlit hours each day, or just long enough to corral a pay-envelop of sufficient fatness to pay the boarding-house and clothes bills, and at night they studied medicine or law in one or another of the night courses in the professional schools of the local colleges. For generations they did this, often studying until far into the night; and the next day they stalled on their jobs, accomplishing nothing, slept at the governmental switch, from exhaustion. A laudable ambition theirs, this idea of working up to the ranks of the professional men; but the program played hob with efficiency.

Now that the Berthas and Tillies and all the rest are coming back to tell their old-time associates glorious tales of war jobs, of double or triple increase over their former wages, vast crowds of the hello-ladies and their sister-workers in other lines are following in the selfsame paths blazed long ago by their brothers in the government clerical service. And add to the incompleteness of telephone equipment, with not even enough sleepy, discontented hello-ladies to man the ancient switch-boards, a sudden and mighty flood of unexpected business that fills

almost every telephone-booth in town during the crowded hours of the day, and the result is chaos. Many an impatient military man or civilian has been compelled to hang up the receiver in disgust and deliver personally or by messenger — if he be fortunate enough to get a messenger — the information which he had hoped to give by telephone.

A government exchange which takes care of department calls shows more efficiency, but even here there is delay at times. And delay on the government lines in days like these is cause for concern far graver than the mere commercial troubles of the district. For instance, in choosing a site for the War College some transcendental genius had the brilliant idea that it should be located about three miles southeast of the War Department,— oh, on simply the cutest water-front spot ever! — on the same principle that causes the field captain of a college foot-ball team always to go off by himself throughout the big game of the season to another foot-ball field about three miles away, with the hope of finding a telephone line over which he can give his signals to the rest of his far-away team. Four of the six committees into which the army's gen-

eral staff—"the Brain of the Army"—is divided are located in the War College. But the desk of the captain of the whole team, the Chief of Staff (who popularly is pictured in the public mind as seated at a big desk while surrounded by his staff, all working together on mighty war problems), is three miles away in the War Department. And so a chief of staff has been known to work steadily at a problem along certain lines while his staff, unacquainted with the chief's way of progressing, simultaneously are tackling the knotty question along diametrically different lines. The Chief and his Staff, it is true, are bound together by three miles of telephone wire, but to be connected by telephone, especially in days of war-whirling, is likely as not to be separated by telephone.

"The people must economize in telephone messages," publicly cries the telephone officials of the capital. They do; they have to. "Don't do this, and don't do that," continue the harassed telephone men, adding a list of economically devised "Don'ts" which fill half a column of local newspapers. "Don'ts" that are not even hinted at in the public proclamations might have been added: "Don't, for heaven's sake! call for 'In-

formation' in the hope of having a wrong number corrected. What 's the use, men? So many numbers have been changed so often lately that 'Information' has been sent to the booby-hatch for psychopathic observation and a complete mental rest." "Don't call a number and expect to get it." "Don't add to the general delay by following the dear old Southern fashion long in vogue in Washington — the fashion which prescribed that one should drawl, 'Aoh, is this Central? Good mawnin', miss. Ah trust you-all aw enjoyin' good health this mawnin'. Now if Ah ain't troublin' you-all too much, may Ah ask you-all, miss, to prepah to do me a favah in yo' official capacity? Get ready, miss. Ah have a numbah all ready fo' you-all.'"

Nope! Speed! more speed! It is the estimate of an official in the municipal government that Washington "as a general thing is about three times as active as it was before the war, and is showing instances where business men not engaged in munitions enterprises or other activities directly connected with the war are doing four times as much business as formerly." When it comes to the telephone, that official is sadly meticulous. The capital has become so busy, in

fact, that the city's "Northwest," which from days untold believed itself to be the whole city, has been crowded to the point of making the astounding discovery that there really is a "Northeast," not to mention a "Southeast" and even a "Southwest" in which white folks actually live, expansive stretches long thought to be as mythical as Crocker Land.

And the feminine shopper, who cries "darn it" and other ladylike oaths when she finds that the telephone service cannot get her in touch with a given bargain sale until long after the last of the marked-down shirtwaists or more intimate garments have been sold, often is tempted to use real cuss words in these days when she sets out to do her shopping at first hand. Early in 1918 the department stores were driven to calling loudly upon the district government powers to help them out of the tangle in which the big rush had tied the shopkeepers. And the District Defense Council responded to the appeal by establishing a set of rules which included, among other things, orders that there must be only one delivery of goods over a given route each day, that the special delivery of parcels must cease, that merchandise to be returned must be brought

back to the shops within three days, that a deposit must be made on all C. O. D. purchases, this last rule being designed to put a stop to the feminine habit of ordering C. O. D. articles by telephone.

As the telephone service, so in a way is the telegraph. On the day the wife and I started out from New York to try to get to the capital I sent a telegram from Manhattan to a Washington address in the late forenoon. It was delivered in Washington twenty-two hours and a half later, and the address to which it was sent is only three squares from the main office of the company in Washington. When the telegram finally caught up with me in Washington I took it to a gentleman chewing a pen in an office of the telegraph company and bleated loudly in protest.

"I can't understand it," he said with a sigh. "Our delivery is now practically normal."

"Oh, you call twenty-two hours normal, eh!" I cried instantly, and I 'll bet *that* crushed him all right, all right. What?

When it comes to the gentle art of real-estate dealings, never has any class of business men been driven to perplexity so great as these same

Washington real-estate agents when it comes to solving the great question as to whether, in the matter of a definition of war, Sherman was right or wrong. The real-estaters, once the whole land began to try to live in Washington, could have abandoned themselves to a perfect orgy of renting if it were not for the sad fact that they soon found themselves with nothing left to rent. They still have some houses to sell, and all the owners ask for them is your bank-book as a first payment and then whatever gold-tooth crowns, gold fillings, and any artificial jaws or knee-caps of silver which your family surgeons, dental and plain, may have stowed away in your anatomy from time to time. Then, too, a paternal Government has, since the war-time overcrowding began, invented an unexpected vexation for the real-estate brethren: just when the agent has rented the last vacant apartment or office building and settles down to rake off his commission from the rents, along comes the Government with a dispossession notice. "Pack up and git, folks," commands the Government. "We 've decided to commandeer this entire building and turn it into offices and laboratories to an advisory committee of the Signal Corps that is cross-

ing parrots with carrier-pigeons so that the War Department can keep in touch with the War College at all times without depending on the telephone. It 's a little idea of the War Department's. Come, come, come, pack up! This way out!" And bingo! the real-estate man, so far as that office building or apartment house is concerned, again is out of a job.

"Put up more buildings," say you. But the builders can't get materials, what with priority certificates of the gilt-edged Grade A making it compulsory for the railroads running into Washington to give first attention to delivering building stuffs for the erection of far-spreading shacks that the Government sticks up over night to house its civil and military increase of family. Furthermore, who 's going to try to get building materials for new edifices when the cost of the material is about forty per cent. higher than normal prices?

When a new hotel of flossy pretension was being rushed to completion a stone's throw west of the Willard, the owners and contractors were on the verge of being bogged in the general swamping of business conditions. Happily they suddenly remembered the all pervading priority

"Sir, I kinnot yet you that numbah, being as the line is busy"

certificates issued by the priority committee of the Council of National Defense. Now, here was a necessary edifice which ought to be finished as soon as possible, if for no other reason than that it stands as close to the Treasury as it is possible for a visiting munition-contractor to get, so close that a contractor fortunate enough to get a room and bath in that hotel can doze off with the sweet realization that all the nation's money bins are almost directly beneath the footboard of his bed. And inasmuch as almost everything in the manufacturing line is now listed, has got itself listed, in the Class A of priorities,— from eighty to eighty-five per cent.! — the contractors and owners did n't see why materials for a swagger new hotel should n't get in on the preferred list. Wherefore they asked for, and obtained, a priority certificate which entitled them to the positive delivery of two railway cars of steel and sundries a day, and work on the new hotel went on joyously. At the time I was in Washington the priority committee, having got almost everything into Class A — which left affairs about as they were before the class was invented,— had begun all over again by thinking up a Class AA for priority certificates, which means a right

of way over even the delivery of mail matter. As more and more articles get into Class AA it will be a simple matter to begin a third time and designate a new and exclusive Class AAA, and so on and on till the kaiser is licked and we're all back to normal again.

And sad to say, it was in the matter of issuing priority certificates that the only slight instance approaching a hint of graft (always excepting, of course, the "honest graft" of the profiteer, who in all wars and all ages jumps at a chance to wring blood-money from the heart of a suffering motherland) that came to my attention in all Washington was revealed. A man secured a priority certificate for a manufacturer whose war contracts entitled him to the certificate, the patriot who had got the certificate for the manufacturer being one of those noble souls who had closed his desk for the nonce back home largely with the idea that he was impressing his neighbors by leaving his own desk in order "to go down to Washington to help out the Government."

"By the way," said the volunteer priority patriot to the manufacturer who had just received a certificate, "have one of my business cards,

merely so you 'll know who I am back home when I 'm not doing this work of helping out the Government." And the manufacturer took the business card; but a moment later, while passing out of the building, he tore it up and angrily threw the scraps away. For in plain United States this particular priority man, in manner as well as act, might just as well have said to the manufacturer: "Here 's my name and business, son; and always remember that when you needed a priority certificate, I 'm the little bright eyes that got it for you. So when you 're passing my place of business back home and need anything in my line, you might show your appreciation by giving me a call. Get me?"

There 's the only instance approaching ghoulishness which I came across during wanderings among all sorts and classes of the grand army of war-workers which has suddenly descended upon Washington, and the instance is listed here in detail because it is so small. The incident gives cause for three rousing cheers for the very reason that it was the worst that could be uncovered in all that wonderful host of volunteers, despite the temptations offered; an army of civilian heroes that includes the best of brain and

energy the country has to offer, men who individually and in the aggregate daily are building for a "dollar a year" a record of unselfish service and honorable devotion that will loom large even among all the glories of this most stupendous moment of the world.

CHAPTER V

THE TOWN WITH THE TROLLEY OFF

EVEN in days of normality no one would have gone so far as to say, at least during the evening hour, when all the clerks of all the department buildings were headed simultaneously toward the suburban residential regions, that an average Washington surface-car had as many vacant seats as one will find, say, in Congress on any hot afternoon that Walter Johnson is scheduled to pitch on the home grounds. But nowadays! Well, nowadays in the rush hours every car is as thoroughly stuffed as a Philadelphia ballot-box on the Sunday before the Tuesday before the first Monday in November. It 's an open question whether or not even a machine election captain in Philadelphia could have wedged a handful of phony ballots into the trolley-car which the wife and I finally boarded, especially after we had merged ourselves into the mass of standees.

It made us provincial New York folk homesick for the comparative comforts of one of those subway expresses due to stop near the Grand Central Station a few minutes before the five-fifteen commutation pulls out for New Rochelle on Christmas eve. Also our conductor had an irritating habit. Every time the car stopped to permit still another nation-saver to horn his way upon the back platform, the conductor, himself wedged hopelessly among a solid bulge of patriots sardined into the forward end of the car, would bellow back in maddening tones to ask us whether or not a sufficient quantity of the newest arrival's anatomy had been tucked aboard to permit the conductor safely to give the starting signal again.

"Howzit? Howzit? Howzit?" Thus the conductor. "Howzit back there?"

"Awful!" shrieked the wife at last in hysteric soprano. "If you must know, Conductor, it 's ab-so-lute-ly fierce!"

But the conductor merely went on conducting. As we inched along westward through F Street he contented himself with steadily demonstrating to the whole class that it must have been a silly old soul who tried to make an axiom of physics

out of the absurd proposition that two bodies of matter cannot occupy the same space in the same Mount Pleasant trolley-car at the same time. Moment by moment the wife informed me, whispering the while between a right ear and a left-side whisker belonging to two total strangers jammed between us, that if the crush lasted just a second longer she would die. Yea, verily, she said, "This town is a City of Magnificent Distances — if you don't have to travel the distances." She lent variety to these outbursts with loud-spoken protests against the incredible time it was taking our car to get from the Union Station to the general neighborhood of the White House.

"But look, dearie, how long it took Bryan to try to get over the same route, and him never making it at that," I cried, with a hearty laugh. Thus I tried to dispel her gloom with merry quip and laughter. And the best I got for my efforts was the distinct realization that if she could have got her hands out of the human jam which pinned her arms and hands to her sides, she would have reached between the strange ear and side whisker that separated us and shaken my short back hair into my eyes.

We managed to get out of the surface-car not much more than half a mile beyond our little hotel in Fourteenth Street. To debark had merely been a matter of beginning a drive on our sector of standing room in the car down near Twelfth and F Streets. Then by battling our way between the strange side whiskers, the unfamiliar ears, and past and under wholly unknown elbows and shoulder-blades, we both emerged through a second growth of whiskers at some place near Dupont Circle, or just in time to catch a passing Auto-To-Hire that landed us back near Fourteenth and K Streets for a mere dollar.

One did n't have to move from the lobby of the hotel after dinner that night to learn what every one connected with the war was or was not, especially was not, doing. For a national capital that for generations has been the Grand Exalted City of Gossip has, once the war-whirl began to spin, laboriously set about the work of collecting and tabulating the most extensive and intensive knowledge of things that are not true to be found at any place in the known world. Even in the normal times of a past and peaceful generation one could always pick up mighty secrets of state

for the mere trouble of stopping to chat with any callow government clerk within range.

Say, listen! Remember young Elmer Hoosis, over in the Agricultural Department, Jim? Well, speaking about that same senator you just mentioned, this here Elmer Hoosis has a desk right next to a feller that was walking through Thomas Circle one night late, when what does this feller see but that same Senator Baffingphone hisself and a lot of other swell ladies and gents trying to climb up on the statue to give General Thomas's horse a bottle of champagne to drink. The whole bunch, so this feller who works next to Elmer Hoosis says, was so lit that even the senator's glass eye was bloodshot. And along comes a cop and wades into the bunch and pulls them off the statue and everything, and what does Senator Baffingphone do but up and bite the cop in the leg. He ought to be run out of the Senate, that guy. And he beats his wife something awful, they say. Of course, Jim, none of this stuff gets into the papers, because Elmer and all the rest of us fellers connected with the Gove'ment just keep it to ourselves.

Thus it was in the old days. But now, with the onslaught of the present war hullabaloo,

these are the happy days for the City of Gossip. One does n't have to move beyond earshot of the nearest hotel lounge — the wife and I did n't — to learn on the authority of none other than a stoutish man who was bulging from the line of beauty on a lounge in the lobby that this here now Food Administrator, Henry Hoover, or whatever his name is, has his own home packed with barrels and shelves of food like he was a whole farmer's exhibit at a county fair. Yep. Right at the crack of the first gun, muh friend, what does this Herb Hoover, or whatever his name is, do but pack his own cellar with a cuppla carloads of wheat, another car of puttatahs, a cuppla barrels of kippered herring, and everything! This comes straight, friend, from a niece of mine that 's been a stenographer in the Food Administration ever since it was started. Say, from what I hear that guy Hoover 's got his libery shelves stacked with more custard pies than Charley Chaplin could throw at Fatty Arbuckle in a whole seven-reel fillum. Yes, indeedy. And this Fuel Administrator, Doc Garfield! Listen, friend. That Garfield guy 's got a private stock of coal that fills his whole darn cellar, spreads over half his kitchen, and spills

out of the bath-tub and every stationary wash-tub in his house. Terrible, ain't it, when even the White House did n't have enough coal the other day to keep the place warm. Yep, I get it straight that Doc Garfield's home looks like it was a flash-light of the whole anthracite basement floor of Scranton, Pennsylvania. And lemme tell you, friend, about these gents that hollered and hollered for prohibition till they got every saloon in the town closed. That crowd 's got enough of the hard stuff hoarded away to float a new Liberty Loan. I 'm told by a man who had ought to know that the main squeeze in that bunch ain't drew a sober breath since Grant first began to hang around Richmond.

One would fancy that the City of Gossip, out of its rich store of experience, would know that these and similar tales quite as silly are — well, silly. But not the City of Gossip! It is on record that shortly after this newest explosion of yarns began to rip through the capital one intellectual of saffron hue among Washington's city editors assigned a yellow-nosed investigator, shortly after the Food Administrator came to town, to hang round the tradesman's entrance

leading to the Hoover household and peer into the garbage-cans as they were carried out the back door each day. And the bright young man peered so long and unsuccessfully to try to find some evidence of wastefulness in Mr. Hoover's glistening garbage-cans that the shiny glare of the cans finally caused an eye strain, which, let us hope, is nothing trivial.

Almost all of the gossipy yarns floating the length and width of the city are merely amusing, but sometimes they are dangerous: "Ain't it terrible about Joe Tumulty! Yep, they're saying all over town that they've just found out he's a German spy, and they whisked him off to the prison in Leavenworth and they're going to line him up against a blank wall right away and send him over the route! And do you know about the battle-ship *Pennsylvania* being sunk abroad? The news just came straight from a man who works in the State, War, and Navy building. The loss of life was terrible, and the hospital in the New York Navy Yard is all filled up now with the wounded, and the navy won't let even the mothers of the poor boys into the yard to see their dying sons!"

Then out from Washington and across the continent rips the "news," causing anguish to the mother of every sailor-boy now in foreign waters. The fact that the credulous, as likely as not, may happen upon Mr. Tumulty on his way to luncheon half an hour after they had convinced themselves that he was about to face a firing-squad out in Kansas, does not keep them from believing the next wild tale that floats their way. So serious were the effects of the Tumulty story and the yarn about the "sinking" of the *Pennsylvania* that the secretary to the President and the secretary of the navy respectively were compelled to issue public statements denying each rumor.

Just about an hour of this strictly confidential sort of "news" being hawked the length of the hotel lobby on the first evening we had been able to spend beneath a Washington hotel roof resulted in the feeling that too much was plenty. Wherefore toward the elevator I led the wife. Who knows but that if we had sat round the lobby long enough some one would have let slip the information that the prexy and faculty of the War College were shattering all the ethics of amateur college sport by grabbing off every

National League professional ball-player drafted and playing them on the War College varsity nine under fake names.

As the elevator took us roomward I evolved a plan to get up early the next morning and buy a pair of those good-dollar breakfasts now being sold in Washington at prices ranging from two to two and a half dollars each. Then we would stroll toward the Capitol. Doubtless it would be of much benefit to a wife, given overmuch to carping criticism, to sit for an afternoon in the impressive half-light of the house galleries; to sit there and gaze down upon and listen to the mighty, dignified statesmen on the floor below; listen and absorb, until the great throbbing of patriotic emotion welling within her should send her, panting uncontrollably, out into the twilit evening air. And we did breakfast together as planned, but perforce we began on our grape fruit long, long after we had given our initial breakfast order to a waiter who was transcendentally the haughty personification of permanent Washington's acute resentment to labor. One could not blame him greatly, inasmuch as he had four crowded breakfast-tables besides our own to look after. But we did begin to feel unkindly

toward him when, after disappearing with our list of breakfast dishes, he either enlisted or was drafted. Finally we were able to flag a captain of waiters, also haughty, but not too proud to take our order all over again and personally peel the boiled eggs.

But as we hurried out to meet the air the clock in the lobby showed that we had spent so much time paging our waiter, our breakfast had n't been served to us until it was almost time for luncheon. All thought of strolling a mile or so to the Capitol had to be put aside. Along came an Auto-To-Hire, and we saw it first.

"To Congress, Jesse James," I said simply to the taxibandit. And we were off toward the House — a House divided against itself, but, so I felt as we began to rattle helter-skelter down Fourteenth Street, so brimful of patriotism that the wife, I knew, was about to experience the first great thrill of her thoughtless young life.

CHAPTER VI

THE EAGLE CHIRPS

ONE might have known that the taxibandit at the tiller was one of those Philadelphia brigands who had just driven his car 'cross-country from Broad and Chestnut streets the day before in order to be in on the Washington war-time pickin's, and therefore had n't the slightest notion where Congress convened. He was all that, also he was of a nature too sensitive, seemingly, to ask for directions; and so he lit right out and slambanged down the Fourteenth Street incline to "the avenue," crossed the town's great aorta instead of turning east into it, and never slowed up until he had zipped eastward for half a dozen blocks along B Street, S. W. There he stopped in front of a big brick building that stretched the length of an ocean-liner of the first class.

Now I, even I, knew that Congress had always

These are the happy days for the City of Gossip

done its nation-saving in a spreading Capitol of marble and much sandstone painted white. Still, what with all the rest of the fast shiftings about and fancy-footed shadow-boxing that now make every day in Washington moving-day, perhaps the House and the Senate had called a couple of moving-vans also, and had staked a new claim within the hollows of the big brick edifice that Jesse James had taken us to. Then came to mind then and there the authentic case where one governmental bureau within the previous six months had moved all its office forces and furniture exactly six times, the directors of that and similar bureaus, far-seeing though they were, having moved each time into offices four feet wider because no one had been decent enough to tell them that the war might continue throughout the entire week to come, and therefore cause a progressive expanding of business up to the point of backing up the furniture van once again the first of the following month. Who knows but that Congress had outgrown the Capitol also?

"So this is where Congress hangs out now, eh?" I remarked to Jesse James as he lined us up beside the roadway and relieved me of the con-

tents of my wallet. And as we wandered toward the entrance, Jesse nodded an affirmative in a shamefaced way before stepping on his flivver pedals and clacking off toward another hold-up.

Two lettered legends, one on each side of an inner entrance, gave us pause. Evidently the hands with index-fingers, one pointing east and the other west, that decorated each sign, respectively, indicated which was the Senate wing and which the House. In turn we inspected the signs. The first one read:

SOUTH EAST RANGE

(Turn to Left)

Osteological Collection

"O-s-t-e-o—" I began. "Why, that means bone and solid ivory and things like that," I cried; and as I hastened toward the more ostentatious sign, which at first glance I had taken for granted showed the way to the Senate, the wife laughed right out loud. For only a moment I was nonplussed by the wording on the second sign-board:

THE EAGLE CHIRPS

SOUTH WEST RANGE

(Turn to Right)

American Stratigraphic Series

of Rocks and Fossils

Also Systematic Series of

Invertebrate Fossils

"Holy mackerel!" The truth had dawned upon me. "Here I ask that fat-headed chauffeur to take us to the House and Senate, and what does he do but dump us off at the National Museum's collection of —"

"Bone, solid rock, spineless fish, concrete and solid ivory," crooned the wife, happily. "Do you know, dearie, there 's the first chauffeur I 've ever seen who approaches genius. I trust you tipped him accordingly. Come, let 's hurry into the 'South West Range' first and give the Senate the once over."

Now this was no slangy, flippant way to approach the august presence of the nation's Congress; but I took a firm grip on my temper, my

tongue, and my wife's arm, and silently I led her eastward through the Mall for a mile, then up a hill, and into the House wing of the Capitol. *Now* the wife would see what she would see. I would show her, or, to be more modest, I and Congress would show her.

It so happened that we had struck a comparatively dull day in the House, as days go now round the Capitol. The final vote on the national suffrage amendment to the Constitution was the only idea on the congressional mind that day, but, taking things by and large, it was a fairish average day for the wife to see. My heart began to pump excitedly upon approaching this great body of representatives who, as I explained to the wife as we crowded into one of the Capitol elevators, for a salary not so very much greater than they might be making back home as country lawyers, had listened to the call of the people and unselfishly had come to Washington not only to labor day and night to save the nation, but to submit gracefully also to the stern mandate of the Federal law which stipulates that each congressman must accept sixty copies of "The Congressional Record" every day!

THE EAGLE CHIRPS

There was little to attract attention when the wife and I arrived on a level with the corridor entrances to the Family Circle tier of seats in the House. Almost nothing was going on except that Billy Sunday was opening the session with prayer, and House stenographers were breaking lead-pencils and finger-nails and fountain-pens trying to keep abreast of Billy's prayer, and women standees were bulging outward into the corridors all the way round the string of Family Circle entrances, and back of these was an overflow of still more women clamoring to get in as madly as if Doug' Fairbanks and Charley Chaplin were chatting on the floor of the House with Mary Pickford and Theda Bara, and Speaker Champ Clark was flashing for the first time a new pearl-gray suit decorated at the lapel with a rose of saffron hue in honor of the occasion, and outside House attendants had taken all the beaded knitting-bags away from the women who had arrived early enough in the earliest morning to find seats inside, and the knitting-bags had been heaped in piles waist-high in the corridors, because it 's against the law to carry any bundles or packages of bombs into the House during wartimes, and Sculptor Gutson Borglum, after wan-

dering accidentally into the Statuary Hall of the Capitol and getting one quick glimpse at the Sculptural Chamber of Horrors, was fleeing with wild screams of terror through the corridors, and even louder than the Borglum yells arose distant thunderings of oratorical impressiveness as various representatives hit the high spots of forensic fervor, and a gavel was banging and banging afar off, and somebody was intoning terrifically about the "b-r-r-r-road and-ah beeounteous pa-rairees, gen-tul-mun, of thee great-tuh and gu-lorias State-tuh which I have thee honor to rep-reesent-tuh in this-ah dis-ting-wished uh-sem-bludge," and a reporter cub padding along behind us hurriedly was balling a metaphor all up by asking his companion, "Who 's the old goat braying on the floor now, Larry?" and some one was banging and hollering, "The Chair reck-ah-nizes thee gnlmn from Mizzooree," and a large lady whose back hair was undecided was shoving along on tiptoe and panting, "I 'm suffickating, Emmy, but I 'll go to my grave happy if I can only get just a glimpse of Jeanette Rankin," and the newspaper telegraph instruments, down the corridor toward the Press Gallery, were sending the news to the sistern in far-away States amid a

chorus of clickings like the seven-year plague of crickets, and the gavel was banging again, and some one was shouting dramatically in purest South Bostonese, "This democracy cawnnot exist hawf free awnd hawf female," and a woman fainted in the crush and was laid out across one of the piles of knitting-bags, and somebody arrived with ice-water for the fainting lady just as we had biffed our way close enough to a door to hear a logically intensive bit of debate that ran:

"Does the genelmn from Cuhnetcut object?"

"I ruh-zerve the right to objec'."

"But does the genelmn from Cuhnetcut object?"

"I ruh-peat, I ruh-zerve the right to objec'."

"But does the genelmn object or does he not object?"

"I ruh-peat again, I ruh-zerve the right."

"Will the genelmn answer yes or no, does he object?"

"I ruh-zerve the —"

"Does the genelmn —"

"I ruh-zerve —"

"Does the —"

"I ruh —"

"Does —"

"I—" Et ceterah-rah-rah!

I tingled with the glory of it all, even with the thrill of these far snatches of statesmanship coming from the hearts and the souls and the lungs of famous patriots whom so far I could not so much as glimpse. At last I was where the war actually was being won! Not a second of the great crisis of world crises was being wasted by these great statesmen, who persistently and steadily were gripping Time himself by his hoary old whiskers and swiftly with savage oratory were winning the awful fight. Ah, if little Freddy Harper and the other lads represented by the four stars on the service flag proudly floating in a window of our wool-sponging place in lower Broadway were only here — thus my thoughts ran as the mighty struggle to win the war went on and on just beyond the massed mobs of women fighting to get into the Family Circle; if Freddy and his bunkies could only step out of the ice-water in which they were standing knee-deep in the trenches of France, waiting, waiting, could but look upon and listen to this splendid and unselfish battle being waged on the floor of the House to win the suffrage vote at the next congressional elections and thereby win the war!

To be here in the Capitol, if only for a moment, would hearten Freddy Harper and his little band of machine-gun lads with the thought that they were ever in the mind of a great people's chosen representatives. And, contented, they would go back to their trenches, and the memory of this wondrous scene as it came to them again during the long, cold nights in France would make them forget their loneliness and the heart chill and the choke of homesickness for a sight again of the bronze Liberty girl standing high on her pedestal in good old New York Bay, torch held far into the blackness, like another mother of the story-books, who nightly puts a lamp in the window for her boy who has been gone a long, long time, but surely will come back to her again.

Every day those lads abroad, every one of them, should receive a copy of "The Congressional Record" in order that they might kill time, while lolling around the trenches doing nothing, by poring over its pages. Thus they would have implanted in their minds each day a concrete understanding of the constancy with which the Congress was standing by them, shoulder to shoulder, of the unselfish zeal with which the chosen spokesmen of the people in the homeland

were fighting with them, inch by inch, always and ever, toward victory. I think of this as I glance through the pages of the copy of the "Record" lying beside me as I write, with its half hundred pages of closely printed type that preserve for all time the burning words and sounding phrases that were uttered on the historic day that the wife and I leaned against the noise coming out toward us. So great was my emotion that day that I know I should not now be able to recall with precision even the few bits and snatches we were able to hear, were it not for the stenographic report in the "Record" now before me.

Beat by beat come the heart-throbs of a nation in anguish:

"Do I understand that the gentleman's request for unanimous consent goes to the extent of ordering the previous question on the rule, so as to cut out the offering of the amendment to the rule?" "It does." "Then I object." "The gentleman from Florida objects." "I move the previous question on the resolution." "If the gentleman from Illinois controls the time for the rule and the gentleman from Tennessee controls the time against it, this side of the House is without time." "May I ask if the gentleman will yield some of his time to this side of the house?" "Certainly; I had made promises for more time but

I will see that that side gets an equal division of the time." "Will the gentleman yield ten minutes to this side?" "Yes." "Mr. Speaker, I understand that it is settled now that I have twenty minutes under my control. Is that correct?" "I do not understand that the proposition was that the gentleman from Tennessee should have twenty minutes." "I am entitled to that time under the general rule." "For what purpose does the gentleman from Virginia rise?" "To see what has become of my time." "It has gone." "I had three minutes left." "I know the gentleman would have three minutes left if it was not for the clock." "Now, what does the gentleman from Virginia want?" "I just wanted my time." (Prolonged laughter.)

So for a long, long time they talked inspiringly about how much time they would have to talk. If I could but be down there with them on that floor, fighting, fighting, side by side with them as they gave their very life's breath to speed up the war so that Freddy and all the Freddies early could come home again! Here was efficiency in fighting, with no thought of self, surely with no thought of infusing the pettiness of party politics at so serious a moment in the nation's history; no flippancy, but only the pure voice of a great people clamoring for the swift victory for their

suffering boys in France. Shameful, I could see now, were the stories going about that morning to the effect that Democrats and Republicans at a time like this intended to devote every precious moment of that whole war-time day trying to "put the other side in the hole" politically. Creatures walked through those Capitol corridors who were low enough even to say outright that a delegation of party politicians only the day before had, in their extremity, influenced a President of the United States, by running to him and pleading with him at the last moment, to shove aside his tremendous war burdens so that he too might play party politics by coming out with a petty partizan plea for suffrage in order to influence the voters to vote the Democratic ticket in the November election to come. How silly were such insinuations, so I thought, against the people and their representative leaders, my leaders, when long ago all the other fighting nations of the world — Germany, Austria, England, France, Belgium, Italy, all — had set aside party politics as childish things that should not, could not, intrude themselves at a moment when the World War demanded the concentrated thought

of all that was best in all politics and statesmanship if a nation were to prevail.

And so the gossip floating about was just silly; it could n't be possible that our wondrous nation, of all the countries on earth, alone could be giving thought to petty political advantages, alone of all the world could be insane enough to try to conduct the war from the point of view of miserable party politics. It was time such stories ceased. Why, I had even heard a white-haired officer of the American Army, bronzed by a life spent in the winds and sun of experience and noted far and wide among military scientists as one of the most thorough students of his calling living to-day, heatedly make the accusation, again and again, that "rotten party politics are responsible for the thrusting aside of a soldier who not only has the finest mind in all our army, but pretty close to the best mind we ever had in our army." I had laughed, feeling sorry for him and his fatuity even as I laughed.

"But it 's true," the officer had stormed. "Out of a hundred million people he was the only American who, within a few weeks after Germany spilled into Belgium, did not content

himself with saying that the United States possibly would get mixed up actively in the war in Europe, who did n't even rest with saying that probably we would get into it; he said from the first in a quiet, certain way to those who should be told — and that includes the whole Washington crowd — that we could not *possibly* keep out of the war. They laughed at him. Then, when no one else would do anything, he started in to do all that an officer in the army dared initiate in the way of preparedness. He evolved the Plattsburg idea. He knew that Bryan's boast of 'a million men springing to arms between sunrise and sunset' was blithering bosh, and that if such an army did arise miraculously, it would, without officers to direct it, be a worthless mob. And no one in all Washington would begin to train the officers, so he took a first batch of raw material to Plattsburg and taught them the rudiments of the game. Then as senior general in the army he was influential enough to hammer the lunkheads, who should have been helping his work along, but were n't, into lending some governmental assistance, and he trained more and more raw boys into the groundwork of soldiering. Members of his staff did a lot of the actual

work, but he was always personally on the job at Plattsburg and at the other camps that arose as a result of his Plattsburg idea.

"But all the time he was getting in bad by indirectly criticizing the department; not that he ever criticized directly, but by preaching and practising preparedness when the Government was doing nothing he hurt a lot of feelings. If it were not for him, we 'd have gone into this war even worse off than we were and are. Did the politicians show any appreciation? Shucks! He happens to be a Republican. He was even 'prominently mentioned' at the Chicago convention of 1916 for a few minutes as a Presidential possibility. If he ever came back from France after having served his country there with the ability that his political enemies knew he would display, he 'd be in danger of being nominated to head the Republican national ticket at the subsequent Presidential election. Probably he would be elected. And so when we went to war and needed his great services as never before, they put the rollers under him."

I had argued it out with the learned army man, I remembered as the wife and I stood in the Capitol corridor trying to hear the House; had

insisted to the army man that he must be mistaken, until he jumped from his chair angrily and had left me. But whatever misgivings he may have aroused within me that day, they were all dispelled, blown away, by the noble vocables arising from the floor of the House. Where the army man had caused me uneasiness by his hard marshaling of incidents, the patriots of the Congress caused me to gulp with patriotic emotion. Word for word, thanks to the stenographic report of the day's session printed in "The Congressional Record" before me, I repeat here the sentences and strings of sentences that came out to us as the door near which we stood was opened and closed, closed and opened. Now would come refutation, so I whispered to the wife, of the stories of the low gossipers who could accuse even the country's ordained representatives of forgetting the war while they squabbled for partizan place and power.

Again the door beyond the mob in front of us was pushed open for some moments, held open for at least a little while by the press of humans against it. We cupped our ears and listened:

"Mr. Speaker, for five long months I gave the best that was in me physically and mentally, and cheer-

fully gave several thousand dollars of my individual funds, for Democratic victory in my State. I was deeply grateful that Kentucky rolled up her biggest majority in thirty years for the Democratic ticket. I—" [Door closed. Opened again.]

"The chair recognizes—"

"It was my privilege yesterday afternoon to be one of a committee of twelve to ask the President for advice and counsel (laughter) on this important measure." (Prolonged laughter.)

"If this resolution is defeated to-day the country will understand whom to hold responsible—one section of the country controlling the Democratic Par—"

"It was known by the committee that went to see the President that the Republicans were going to take this matter up and pass it in caucus, was it not?"

"I want to say this: Without the votes of the Democratic Members from California, the Speaker would not be in the Chair. And I want to say further to the Members on the Democratic side that the returns indicated two hours before we closed our polls in the West that the President was defeated—"

"Mr. Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives, a little more than 400 years ago Columbus discovered America."

"What the State of Iowa needs worse than anything else is a lot of first class political funerals among their Members of Congress and State legislature." (Prolonged laughter.)

Unsatisfactory as it was to stand there and get only drabs of sentences and paragraphs, a sentence or phrase or paragraph as the door was opened or closed again, the wife and I realized — I 'm sure, at least, that I did — from the very fervency of the debate that some mighty issue of a war-stricken land was at stake. Just what they were debating about I could not, of course, tell. Sometimes, so I noted between door-swingings, the question of who had discovered America seemed to be at issue, but again they would swing four hundred years forward and go into learned and lengthy dissertations on the political history of Kentucky, Iowa, or any of several States during the latest national campaign. Then there was an instant hush in the hubbub coming from the women standees massed around us as again the door swung open long enough to enable us to realize that still another speaker was dwelling upon the many excellences of the lady from Montana, Miss Rankin. Doubtless the speaker was extoling some fine bit of statesmanship which Miss Rankin had contributed to the all-important, the only important, work of speeding up the war. Unfortunately, the door remained open only long enough to enable us to hear only one

sentence of the orator's appreciation of Miss Rankin's efforts to aid her warring America:

"The lady from Montana has introduced a joint resolution in this House recognizing the right of Ireland to home rule."

The door was closed before I could readjust my mind from Columbus's discovery to the political situation in Iowa and then over to Ireland. Then for a long time the sentences came dribbling out to us as the door swung back and forth, all of us waiting patiently during the rapidly recurring intervals of comparative silence for the door to open again long enough to permit us to hear a paragraph more:

"I know there are a great many patriotic women in the State of Ohio who are able to cast just as intelligent a vote as any Member of this body, but our party platform is against it. So until that barrier is raised I shall vote against this amendment."

"It is passing strange, Mr. Speaker, that the President should so suddenly change his mind on this proposition. I will not say that he changed it because he foresaw that this (Republican) side of the House was going to vote almost unanimously for it and tried to beat us to it, but it certainly is a rather funny proceeding. Surely, if Woodrow Wilson can change his mind over night and get by with it—"

"Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that the President should be so severely arraigned and criticised as he has been to-day for having yesterday afternoon by means of his self-arranged newspaper publicity, gotten aboard the bandwagon of national woman suffrage, which, so evident to him at that time, was being carried on to certain victory by an overwhelming majority of Republican votes. He should not be censured because he may have a new idea once in a while."

"Mr. Speaker, I have heard it said that the Republicans are going to vote for this (suffrage) resolution almost solidly, and that it would be good politics for the Democrats to line up solidly for it also, else the Republicans would get credit for its passage, and the Democrats would be swept from power in the next elec—"

Enthralled though I was in the magnificent war-time evidences of history in the making that were coming to my ears, I could not help but notice that the wife, who had become somewhat separated from me in the milling around of the crowd, was desperately trying to press her way out of the mob. She seemed displeased, to put it mildly, with something or other; what it was I had no means, of course, of knowing. It was just as the words, "It would be good politics for the

Democrats to line up solidly for it also," were being intoned impressively from within that the wife began to elbow her way toward the rear of the crowd violently. Maybe the man standing back of her had been drinking or the stout lady beside her may have been shoving too hard. Well, so far as I could see, the wife had suffered no serious injury, and her face had suddenly flushed to a shade so closely resembling a three-alarm fire that I knew she had n't become faint in the crowd. If she wanted to go back to our hotel, well and good; she knew the way. I had come too all-fired far from home to hear these foremost statesmen of the land to pull out of the crowd now just because the wife had taken offense at some imaginary trouble or other. The unreasoning, pettish, emotional way the mind of woman does work at times sure does keep me winging.

She was gone, and I had forgotten her the instant the sentences, or bunches of sentences, began to filter out into the corridor again:

"Mr. Speaker, I was amused at my friend from Oklahoma, Mr. Ferris, who wants us to stand by the President. God knows I want to stand with him. I

am a Democrat, and I want to follow the leader of my party, and I am a pretty good lightning-change artist myself sometimes (prolonged laughter); but God knows I cannot keep up with this performance." (Prolonged laughter.)

"If the wife should disagree with the husband and have her vote counted in opposition to his, then we would find the husband and wife constantly engaged in political disputation, which would grow more heated and more acrimonious as a campaign advanced, until finally a veritable conflagration of domestic infelicity would be kindled, consuming the marital tie, destroying the home, and sending the children orphans out on the cold charity of the world to become charges on the State. This picture is not overdrawn."

"God knows that factional politics is bad enough even when—"

"Every man on this floor came into this world at the peril of his mother's life."

"If the gentleman thinks that and acts accordingly he will go to jail some of these days." (Prolonged laughter.)

"Every novel in our youth told us of some young fellow who told his girl that she should never soil her lily-white hands with work; but the last chapter showed her taking in washing to support an orphan asylum for a drunkard's home, the children of a man sleeping somewhere in a drunkard's grave."

"Mr. Speaker, Zobier Pasha, still living, I think,

in the Sudan, was the greatest slave king Africa ever saw."

Although the statesmen had been talking steadily for more than two hours,— they had assembled an hour earlier than usual that day because of the unusual need for rapid, incisive action in this and countless other critical matters at hand, — I was still unable to piece out their different arguments sufficiently to enable me to figure out just what great war measure was engaging their attention. Never was the thought so distressingly borne in upon me that I was but a humble wool-man who had no part in the same intellectual world in which these leaders of the people thought and moved. No son of mine, if a son ever be borne to bless us, would go through life without a college education as I had been compelled to do, that I resolved then and there as the feeling crushed me that I had n't even the mind training to enable me to sense even vaguely what my mental superiors on the floor below were laboring so mightily about.

Most wonderful of all to me, little as I understood it all, was the untiring energy of these patriots in our great war crisis. They spoke on

and on and on as if it were a pleasure for them to do so, whereas, even I could vaguely see that they were voluntarily taking upon their unselfish shoulders a labor of patriotic love that would have crushed us lesser men. And in their anxiety to finish up this thing, whatever it was, in the briefest possible time, so that instantly they could grapple with the next stupendous war problem awaiting them, they shot forth their thoughts with machine gun rapidity, so that not a golden moment be wasted.

Back and forth swung the door, and came to me the splendid periods, remarkable for originality of thought, content, and expression, that showed no war-time instant was being wasted:

"The gentleman from Alabama reminds me of the man at the banquet in New York City. He and his friends had—" (Door was closed before the speaker had got far into his funny story. Door was opened as great burst of laughter followed the completion of the story.)

"Something has been said about the control of this House passing from the Democratic Party and the South; we are more concerned in the South in controlling our own affairs than we are in controlling the small amount of patronage of the gang of poli-

ticians that are coming to Congress merely for the loaves and fishes."

"The Chair recognizes—"

"My mother, with my dear father, who has passed away, crossed the prairie. It was my mother who, when the hot winds blew and the grasshoppers came, said, 'No, Jim, we will not go back to Ohio.' My mother," &c. [Door remained open long enough to enable us to hear early history of the orator, his father and mother, but space limits forbid a reprint of the engrossing history here.]

"No man, no woman, ever lowered a standard by performing a duty."

"In the next Presidential campaign no Republican can be elected without the vote of the States where women are enfranchised. No Democrat can be defeated if he can secure these votes. Fortunately for us the Republicans wobbled on this issue in the last campaign. They will not repeat the blunder, and if the Democratic Party is to continue to rule this country it must display a willingness to meet this issue."

"Mr. Speaker, the world moves."

"Mr. Speaker, the life of Lucy Stone was as inspired as that of Joan of Arc. Born in the little farming town of West Brookfield, she," &c. [History of Lucy Stone Blackwell's childhood, girlhood, and womanhood. Again space limits, unfortunately, do not permit reprint of the interesting details. Those interested see "The Congressional Record," Vol. 56, No. 20, and read on and on.]

"Mr. Speaker, the people are made up of men and women."

"Why cannot women vote? Simply because they are the one great part of the population to whom the franchise has not been granted."

"Mr. Speaker, a change in the fundamental law of the United States is a serious question."

Then for a longer interval than usual the door remained closed. Just a faint blurring of the shouts within came to us, now and again punctuated with personal banterings back and forth as the patriots relaxed for a moment from the great strain and indulged in merry quip and lengthy laughter.

The long time I had been standing there in the crush, the heated air, something, began to make me feel depressed. As always these days when depression sits upon me, my thoughts began to dwell upon the war, our war. Also my war thoughts always persist in centering upon our Freddy Harper, who years before had come to our office as errand boy, bright-eyed and snappy as a young fox-terrier, and had steadily worked his way into our hearts, and up and up in our business firm. Then the war had come,

and Freddy, who loved life more than any youngster I had ever seen, grew moody for days. One morning he had come into my office and had had a long talk with me, and then he had shaken hands all around and had walked out of our business place. And a few days later we had put a service flag in our window, not in silly boastfulness, but because it was the least we could do in honor of Freddy Harper, whom we loved very much. One by one we had added to the lone star on our first flag until there were four stars in all on the little silk banner that one of our office windows framed. In turn the four lads had left us, each of them dropping in for a few moments later on to say good-by, bravely garbed in their new khaki, and their eyes alight with the wonder of the great adventure. The names of two of them, humble wool-spongers, I could not even recall. The name of the third, a red-haired Irish lad, red-haired, white-souled and blue-eyed, I might have forgotten forever, too, if it were not that his old mother had come to our office one day to tell us how he had walked up to death, a gentleman unafraid.

He was lying in a hospital in Lyons now, his

chin and much of his lower jaw shot away — Eddie Murphy was his name, by the way — and he never would be able to talk again; he "never would be any good again," as Eddie's sister, who had accompanied her mother from their home in Harlem to our office, had put it.

"If Eddie was only here," his mother had said, "instead of suffering all alone among strangers so far away, in this place I never before heard tell of,— Lyons, is n't it they call it, Susan? — if I only had the boy with me, it would n't be so hard. But to lie in my bed at night thinking and thinking as I do that it is only strangers that are caring for Eddie is tearing my heart till — till — I know I promised you, Susan, that if you took me here I 'd not bother these gentlemen by crying, but, God help me! I — I can't help myself." And she had turned toward the wall and buried her face in the cheap little muff she carried.

We had comforted her as best we could, and when she had become calmer again we had told her that immediately we would find a place for Susan in our office or work-rooms and pay her Eddie's wages besides. But she had sat there unheeding, twisting her muff in her hands. And it was only when we had begun to tell her that her

Eddie was not among strangers that her interest had come again. All the hearts and the thoughts and the dynamic energies of a greatest land, we had assured her, solely were being concentrated with helpful aid upon her Eddie, and upon all the Eddies who formed that splendid flower of young American manhood hurrying eastward to Eddie's aid. Why look upon him as deserted, neglected? we had asked her encouragingly, when all Eddie's countrymen, each so far as lay in his power, had thrust aside personal ambition, private gain, every selfish interest, that they might labor, day and night, as one great united people, led by brilliant statesmen, whose minds had grown serious and sobered in a day as they jumped forward to lead to swift victory.

The door just ahead of me that led to an aisle in the House gallery suddenly was shoved open again and from within came a great gale of raucous laughter. And then as the merriment died down a bit the voice of still another orator came out to the mob in the entrance:

"Mr. Speaker, a certain Southern bachelor poet, in a spirit of poetic fervor, exclaimed:

'Woman, woman, thou art divine!
Oh, that I had one I might call mine,

To soothe me in my worstest woes,
And cook my dinner and wash my clothes.' ''
(Tremendous applause and laughter.)

"God Almighty!" I swung round as my wife gripped my arm with a hand that trembled, her voice, low and tense, coming to me in this semblance of a prayer; for it was a prayer, though spoken through clenched teeth. Somehow she had worked out of the crowd for a time, but later, fascinated, had pushed a way close to me again.

"God in heaven!" she cried again, once we were free of the mob, "we 're at war! Don't they know it? At *war!* Mountebanks! High-school commencement 'oratory'! Silly jokes! Village politics! Roaring like fools over doggerel that rises to the heights of rhyming woes and clothes! I don't demand long-faced solemnity, — even at a funeral, for that matter,— but I do demand at least dignified efficiency, decency, unselfishness, unity, anything and everything that 'll help in a terrible crisis like this. A hideous monster gripping the very throat of the country, my country, shattering forever the lives of that boy from your office and thousands like him, ripping his chin off and tearing the heart out of

his mother, all their mothers! And this gang here wastes hours and days on asinine antics! For almost three hours I 've listened to them now, each side trying to block the way of the other in the scramble for votes next November. In all this sickening day not a jackanapes on that floor, not *one,* has given the slightest indication that he was devoting a single thought to whether suffrage was or was not a great national good. My own America, everything that 's decent in this whole world, calling for help, and still they snarl and squeal and squéak for votes, their own re-elections, party power, down there in that hole like a — a — like a pitful of vile rats!"

And then I got mad, mad clean through, just as mad as the wife was. I would n't stand for talk like that, not from my wife or any one else. For more than fifteen years we had struggled along without exchanging billingsgate or bitterness; but now, first and last, I opened up on the wife, right there beyond earshot of the crowd, balled her out and laced into her until the whole House had nothing on me for oratorical fireworks. Should these men be singled out for vile abuse, I demanded, when every one else in the land, from the highest leaders in the executive and legis-

lative branches of our Government down to the lowest-browed, bull-necked captain of a gas-house election precinct, had agreed that the written and spoken idea is the first weapon of modern war? Who was she, I thundered, to holler out abusively her own private ideas when it had been decided by the greatest leaders, as soon as these unspeakable Huns had reached toward us with hands red with the gore of girls and babes, that the thing to do was to *talk* some sense and a feeling of shame into the monsters; raise an army, yes, but not necessarily so big and costly an army that its sheer size and strength and equipment would throw the fear of God into the savages. So great an army, and its accompanying promise that we were preparing for ten years, fifteen years if necessary, of fighting, might go far toward splitting the allies of the Hun away from him, might even cause within the Hun himself a revolutionary stomach-ache so sickening to him that he would have to lie down and piteously call out, "*Kamerade!*" But think of the cost of going so whole heartedly into the battle — the cost in dollars! And think of the time such an army would take up in the raising and training and equipping of it, hours so long that little or no time would be left for the

The whole house had nothing on me for oratorical fireworks

pleasanter and less costly practice of sending out an army just large enough to make a decent showing and then devoting the rest of our days to winning the war vocally. To let the savage know at the outset that we were going into the war at the fullest tilt might, quite truly, as I pointed out to the wife, end the whole hideous business months or years earlier; but I also reminded her that wiser intellects than hers had throughout a long stretch of war months agreed that "something might turn up" which would end the mess and so make unnecessary the tremendous cost in time and money that would have to be used up immediately if we were to prepare to charge into the mêlée full tilt. Yes, the thing to do in the meantime was to try by messages and oratory to bring about the happy state of affairs where something would "turn up" to help us — to write and talk, talk and write, until the last talon had been talked off the twin black eagles that perch on the spiked helmet of the Sultan of Hell.

"Yes, singe the black wings with hot air!" agreed the wife; but she said it in a way that made me suspicious.

We had come out upon the topmost of the terraces of withered turf that climb to meet the

white marble base of the Capitol, and the sharp, fresh air was good to breathe again. All the capital, our capital, stretched away in seeming peacefulness, flat beneath the haze of a winter afternoon that made the far Virginia hills vague with mist. Up through the haze leaped to the clouds the great granite shaft, simple in outline, as all things in life and art and love and death are simple — simple as the immortal Virginian whose life the granite commemorated. On an eye level, high in the Virginia hillside and haze, nestled the one-time home of the great gray captain who, though he fought on the erring side, was the greatest soldier of his time. Between the shaft and the far colonial home shimmered the marble impressiveness of the new memorial to Lincoln, whose very name suggests anything but marble impressiveness; doubtless if the choice were given him he would exchange —"swap," he probably would call the transaction — with General Washington the impressive marble for the general's simple white shaft. And spreading near and far was the city that seemed to our eyes lazy and sleepy, but really was all agog with a new tumultuousness. As evidence of the new tumult arose lengthy stretches of flimsy build-

ings, "shacks," that alined themselves amid the leafless trees back of and beyond the White House, mushroom shelters that in a night had been reared to house great scientists, financiers, creators from all the walks of science and commerce, who at the first call, without waiting for the call, had jumped forward, like Eddie Murphy, to give the best that was in them for the common good. Home life, great business dreams and practices, everything, they had brushed aside so that they might devote all their alert mentality to a country in dire need of unselfish service: surgeons of world fame, merging their greatness in simple fashion with the splendid legions of khaki-clad lads who had come forth from every office building, shop, factory, farm-house; writers who had flung aside their half-finished tales, perhaps forever, painters who had dropped their brushes; venerable admirals, colonels, their sparse hair long since grown white in a service that well merited the peaceful retirement which had been theirs when the call came, who had put grandchildren from their knees and kicked aside the carpet slippers, and once more had donned a uniform that they had thought had been folded away forever — all now a part of a grand army

that was putting to the test, once and for all, the old new ideals of a young political federation of colonies, the greatest on earth, which now the first time was welding itself into a nation.

We talked of these things, the wife and I, as we walked slowly down the terraces. Some of her anger had gone. She even listened quietly enough when I tried to make her see that the House whose practices of the day she had resented was not made up quite of mountebanks. I told her of a white-haired Jew, middle aged, but with the manner and appearance of an ancient patriarch of his race, who in that House represented not only his constituents in California, but all that the ideals of our country represented; who, when we could bear the insults no longer, had been chosen to present the war declaration which said again that government of the people and by the people and for the people shall not perish from this earth. And I told her about the young congressman from Massachusetts who, years before the Hun broke loose, had suffered ridicule while preaching in the same House we had just left the doctrine of preparedness, preached it alone and lonely; who in his sincerity had donned the khaki also the instant the call had

come, and had scarcely reached his training-camp when he died of illness; had ended his career in a blaze of glory quite as radiant as if he had stumbled among meshes of barbed wire with a bullet through his brave heart.

"Any one, every one," I said gently to the wife — our talk had made us friends again —"has a bit of brain blurring, has to grope about mentally, during the first half-awake hours in the early morning. Every one, you yourself," I went on as we stood near the Peace Monument at the foot of the hill, waiting for our car, "needs the shock of cold water on the face in the morning to rouse the old bean into clear thought and action. And listen, old girl: we may not be aroused yet, we certainly are not as wide-awake as we should be; but when the big shock comes, and jolts us into wide wakefulness —"

But our car had come.

CHAPTER VII

SHERMAN WAS RIGHT

"Then I can write a washing-bill in Babylonic
cuneiform,
And tell you every detail of Caractacus's uniform.
In short, in matters vegetable, animal, and mineral,
I am the very model of a modern major-gineral!"

ALTHOUGH the number of brand-new young army and navy officers paving the streets and lobbies and peacock alleys of the hotels in the capital in these days is almost as large as Mr. Ingersoll's collection of dollar watches, Washington is the last place in America to go to get the best, the only correct, idea and appreciation of our new army. Despite the fact that Mr. Heinz and Mr. Ingersoll have fewer pickles and watches combined than the capital has soldiers and sailors in uniform, if one were to content oneself with an idea of the army gained merely by studying the display it offers at the

capital, one would be in danger of arriving at wholly false, unfair conclusions.

When a great nation explosively takes up arms, somebody, of course, has to hang round offices and do desk work, while the mightier horde of somebodies rushes to the glorious Field of the Cloth of Khaki. And there, in the tented cities of the training camps, not in Washington, is the place to see, really to see, the new army, out under the open sky, in the sunshine or in the rain or in the wind or in the cold and the blackness of night. There, in the open field, are congregated the lads who do not merely want to "do something for the country," who do not enter into the great adventure with misty notions of what that "something" is. Theirs' is the scheme of life as simple as the call of the whip-poor-will: they want to don a suit of soldier clothes and train long enough, just long enough, to learn which part of a rifle is the trigger, and then race up the inclined gang-plank leading to the gray sides of an outgoing transport, calling back happily as they race along: "G'-by, folks! Look me up in Berlin!" These are the lads of the new army who are training on sun-soaked, rain-soaked, sun-hardened, ice-hardened drill-

fields in the East and the West. They are not "pacifists at heart," as some of the executives, regardless of militant and grandiose messages and speeches, far above them are. They are one with Frank Swett Black, now dead, who, because he was a master of the concrete, could say what they can only think:

The fate of nations is still decided by their wars. You may talk of orderly tribunals and learned referees; you may sing in your schools the gentle praises of the quiet life; you may strike from your books the last note of every martial anthem, and yet out in the smoke and thunder will always be the tramp of horses and the silent, rigid, upturned face. Men may prophesy and women pray, but peace will come here to abide forever on this earth only when the dreams of childhood are the accepted charts to guide the destinies of men.

They, the boys in the open, not the lads in Washington, are the real new army. I knew one of them, and he is a type. He was a young reporter, within the draft age, when the war began. Some one in Washington knew of his ability. Washington did him the honor of sending for him. He told me when he came back what had happened there.

"Nothing doing," he said. "They wanted me to do some kind of press-agent publicity to take the curse off the knocks in the newspapers about the mosquitos in Yaphank, Long Island, and the raps against the other sites selected for cantonments. They said they 'd give me sixty dollars a week — pretty soft, what? — to write the stuff they want to get before the public, and they said they 'd see that I got a commission in a short time. But I told them nothing doing."

"Why not?" I asked.

"Well," he said bashfully, fixing his glance on his shoes, "I 'd only be a sort of clerk there. I don't think a husky guy like me has any business sitting around a desk in Washington, or just handing out tracts and warning the boys about cigarettes in a Y. M. C. A. hut in France, or ducking the real stuff the way a lot of these rah-rah boys are doing. I ain't looking for trouble, but if I 've got to get it, I don't want it to be from a type-writer falling on my foot or poisoning myself to death by sucking an indelible-pencil. This is a good job they 're offering me, and it 's darn nice of them; but if I took it, I would n't feel comfortable, and I know the folks, my father and mother, would n't like it. They 'd

just keep fretting, like I would, over taking a job that was just keeping me out of the draft. Get me? I would n't feel comfortable."

So he enlisted as a private. I saw him only once after that. It was round Thanksgiving day, I remember. They had let him come home from the training camp because daily drills on soggy fields down on Long Island had been a bit too much for him; six years spent largely pounding a type-writer in a hot office had not fitted him for sudden entry upon a life in the cold outdoors, and temporarily he had lost his voice. But a few days of vacation set him right again, and then he went back to Long Island to resume his drills again. And the last I heard about him was just an item that he was over in France, taking things easy, prone in a field, and comfortable at last, "with a big blue mark on his forehead and the back blown out of his head."

He was one of the new army. Doubtless there are many like him among the soldier lads who throng the capital now, but, unfortunately, one constantly is falling over the kind of "officer" who wants "to do something" up to, but not quite including, a trip to a front-line trench, where one stands waiting through the black night

for the whispered order to go over the top with the best of luck, and the devil take the foremost. Threatening them had been that pesky draft; and if one is of draft age, one stands a chance, which comes uncomfortably close to a certainty, that one will have to go through that very experience in a black trench some night.

"Not for *me!*" secretly says the youngster of canniness. "Gee! I'm only twenty-seven and perfectly healthy, so the draft is going to get me. It's me to see if father or Uncle Jim or somebody doesn't know some one in Washington. Maybe I can get a job down there that won't be so bad. Anyway, truck-drivers and chaps like that can carry a gun and do the dirty work better than I can; but there are a lot of other things to be done at Washington which a man like myself can do, and a truck-driver can't." (Which is an argument containing elements of logic.) Whereupon father or uncle or a business associate or close friend grasps an end of a wire and begins to pull it. Then, when the wires have been pulled hard enough, the youngster one day flashes forth in his brand-new khaki brooksbrothers or searsroebucks, now a proud clerk dressed in the uniform of a lieutenant, captain, or, if over

thirty, even a major. Thereafter in manner, if not in actual words, he sighs to an admiring world, "Yep, I just chucked everything and came down here to do my bit."

Not that all the specimens of the new young army which one stumbles upon steadily in Washington are just like that lad. Not by a great deal. Momentarily one meets up with young novelists, brokers, brilliant newspaper and magazine writers, lawyers, actors, advertising experts, all now in uniform, who are beyond the draft age, but still young enough and game enough to give up salaries, business incomes; they have sublet the flat or the little new house with its trimmings of wooden lace in the suburbs — "First and Second Mortgage Hall," as one of them called his home — and come to an army or navy desk in Washington at half, a third, or a fifth of their regular incomes. One of them had long been receiving a salary of two thousand dollars a week (real money, not stage) as a movie hero, but gave it up to serve as a captain at about one fortieth of his accustomed wage. And they tackle their new jobs with the zeal of a convert tackling his newest religion, with an emotional energy that brings smiles, sometimes cynical

smiles, to the bronzed faces of West Point and Annapolis alumni, to whom this war business is — well, just a regular business. And it is good that the emotional pep is in them: Newman, Ignatius, St. Augustine, Orestes Brownson, Rose Hawthorne Lathrop, all tackled a new job successfully because they went at it with a fervor of which only a convert who has set aside physical and mental comforts seems capable.

Mingling with these are the "regulars," to whom the new excitement is merely a speeding up in a trade that calls for no outburst of emotion. No American city hives harder workers than this aggregate of regular soldiers and volunteers; but the whole military impression in Washington is not edification unalloyed, for the reason that the lad with a pull almost always lands a Washington billet and is constantly bobbing up before the visitor. Into the hotel rooms of busy men of influence, into their offices, their homes, stream the youngsters of draft age, all presenting their "letters," all "anxious to do something," so long as it will keep them in an office that is tightly enough closed to prevent a severe draft on the back of the neck. The horrors of war to them are centered in their inability

to get a room with bath at the Shoreham or Willard while bothering everybody for a Washington job that includes a commission. And the quality of their brains and hearts retrogrades in direct ratio to the length of the war. For as the country saw our end of the Big Mix-up stretch through a summer and autumn and winter and on into earliest spring, the capital began to rain bearers of letters of introduction who had held out until the last, not having the gumption in the earliest days to exchange home pleasures for even the discomforts of Washington, but all waiting until a draft number was beginning to reach right out and bite 'em. Among them were countless youths who, fearing the shoulder blisters that might come from carrying a rifle, had tried at least to get a commission in an officers' training camp, but had been rejected because they lacked the hearts and the brains and the guts that an officer should have. Back they went to their home towns then, and to inquisitive neighbors they described their brain and soul ailments as "eye strain," "slight physical defect," or, to quote the commonest term for head and heart hollowness, "flat feet"; whereas the chief trouble was that the army men who had probed into

their general mental make-up had early discovered in the training camps that any one of them could comfortably wear a demi-tasse for a high hat. And down they came to Washington next, knowing that their draft number was still snapping at their heels, and began to look round for an office desk with a Southern exposure and a suit of working-clothes that included at least one bar at the shoulder, leather puttees, and a pair of third-act spurs warranted to play the very dickens with the rugs on the Willard's Peacock Alley or to gouge all the varnish off the Government's desk-chairs.

"This whole dam' town," drawled an admiral of the navy, famous for his own efficiency and his biting wit, as he talked one day, months after we had entered the war, of the kind of Washington "officer" whose uniform is common in the hotel peacock alleys—"this whole dam' place is a town choking to death with 'efficiency.' Washington, if you want a brief description, is a city composed of efficiency and flat feet. They 're down here to 'do their bit,' too, every one of these slickers. They 're down here to get their bite, that 's what. 'Flat feet,' 'dropped from officers' training camp because of slight

physical deficiency.' 'Slight physical deficiency,' me eye! Listen, son: that slight physical deficiency almost always is in the head, or they'd have got their commissions in the line. Did you ever hear of a boy flunked out of Annapolis classrooms who did n't have 'bad eyes.' by the time he stepped off the train at home? Neither did I. These kids down here have brains enough to match pennies, have n't they? Well, matching pennies and being a Vice-President of the United States and shouldering a rifle have one thing in common: none of them requires the slightest intelligence. And if they have n't brains enough to handle men in battle, they ought to shoulder a rifle; that or shut up about 'doing their bit' up and down the hotel lobbies of this town. It does n't take an intellectual giant to grasp the thought in an officer's mind when he yells, 'For-r-r-d march!' or, 'Over the top, and the best of luck, and give 'em hell!'

"But they 're mama's boys, and their mamas and papas are as much, or more, to blame than they are. Instead of giving the young cub a good whaling, papa moves heaven and Washington to get his own son a soft job here, and then runs out on the front stoop to give three rousing

"Oh, in one of our Indian wars out West," finally he admitted

cheers when a regiment of somebody else's sons marches by. And mama buys a sweet little service-flag to stick in the parlor window while weeping to the card club about 'poor Ethelbert, off to the wars.' That service-flag is a memorial to the fact that Ethelbert 's landed a good job here which pays him about thirty iron men a week more than he could earn in any place one door beyond the old man's office.

"Some of these boys who 've got commissions here are doing splendid work — in the Intelligence Department, or inspecting motor-engines that they learned a lot about while running their own cars or while puttering round papa's automobile factory; or they 've been on magazines or newspapers or been turning out best sellers, and so can do a lot of stuff here that a trained writer can do a darn sight better than a regular army or navy man can. But there 's a gosh-awful bunch around this town who are just clerks and ought to be considered as such. Even they are needed here, but for heaven's sake let 'em get out of the idea that they are making sacrifices, 'doing their bit,' and all that monkey business. Give 'em the jobs that 'll exempt them from the draft if they have n't the nerve to go into the line as

privates — and they have n't. But it gets my dander up every time I see one of these clerks, all decked out in uniforms and spurs and things, like Astor's sorrel mare, and then see a big, two-fisted, red-blooded private named Hymendinger or Sweeney, who 's in this thing to see it through or get his gizzard blown through his backbone while trying, breeze along and have to bring his hand up in respectful salute to a clerk who has n't got moral fiber enough to make a pair of laces for Private Hymendinger's bow-legged canvas leggings."

He 's awful rough, this admiral is. Sometimes he talks som'thin' terrible. I happened to catch him when he was in a fairish humor, but when he 's in real good form his talk would make those mamas and papas who think other mamas and papas should supply the boys for the trenches quite certain that he is a mean old thing, so there! His whole theory of the art and practice of war he expresses in a motto of one line, " Kick 'em in the slats!" He is crude enough to think that spies should be shot, on the principle that one unshot spy will cause the deaths of innumerable American boys. Wholly differing in ideas with the good ladies who send flowers to murderers,

and therefore differing with their prototypes in trousers at Washington, his voice sounds lonely in a land of sentimentalists administered by sentimentalists as he advocates not only the shooting of spying Teutons, but also the shooting of American lads caught sleeping when on sentry duty, inasmuch as sleeping sentries mean unnecessary deaths to their brothers in the trenches. He shares at least one idea with the great gray fighting machine that for years has beaten the whole world to a standstill and will continue victorious until we have sent a greater machine against it — he shares the Hindenburg idea with the rest of the " regulars " of the army and navy, who surely know as much about their trade as the congenital pacifist does, who believe that a nation has no business in war unless it goes along with its work on the theory that war necessitates vulgar things, such as sticking a bayonet into a swine's belly when the swine charges, and turning the steel round half a dozen times without once pausing to sigh, " Really, swine, this hurts me more than it does you."

This same splendid naval officer is quickest to praise the good work of the young and middle-aged volunteer officers that one finds at desks all

over the capital now, even though the emotional ardor of the new desk officers at times causes him to share the indulgent smiles of his unemotional colleagues in the regular service. It was he who told me of the over-anxious young man who gave an unpleasant moment to the owner and publisher of a New York daily newspaper published in the German language.

In the course of his Washington duties the arduous young man happened upon a paragraph (in German, of course) printed on the front page of the New York daily. The young man jumped up with an indignant exclamation, made a broad blue-pencil mark round the offending paragraph, and then, knowing that the publisher of the paper happened to be in Washington, summoned him up on the carpet.

"What do you mean, sir, by printing *that?*" cried the young man, tapping the marked paragraph angrily. The German-American newspaper man adjusted his glasses, read the paragraph, and looked upon his inquisitor in amazement.

"Why, my dear sir," cried the publisher, "that is merely the British casualty list for the past month, officially sent forth by the British war authorities themselves. That list is first

submitted to the censor in London, then it is handed to the Associated Press to be cabled to this country, next it is passed upon by the naval censorship office in Broad Street, New York, before being released to the New York office of the Associated Press. And then the cable is edited in the Associated Press office, and finally sent broadcast to the association's newspaper clients in America, of whom my paper happens to be one, for publication. You will find that cable despatch, sir, in almost every paper in America this morning, just as we have printed it, except that one of my staff, of course, translated it literally into German for our paper."

"That 's it," stormed the young man, pacing his office. "The thing looks so damnable printed in *German!*"

There one has an example of the meticulousness of the novice which at its worst is only amusing. More edifying is the fine zeal which one sees at its best among the newly made officers, just out of mufti, who compose an important section of the Intelligence Department of the army. The very secretiveness of their work encourages mystery and whisperings even outside of office hours. Many of them have desks

in the War College, which is one building in a warring Washington into which, so far as I could learn by actual experiment, the casual visitor may not roam at will. In a way they do much work popularly supposed to be done by our Secret Service operatives in war-time. And it is well that so many of these new officers, who in a recent civilian state had been writers, professional men of parts, or engaged in other vocations that required brains, have been promptly put, once they received their commissions, at the intelligence work they are now doing. They have immeasurably more intellect than the average Secret Service operative for one thing, which partly, not altogether, makes up for their lack of "detective" training; and again, it is well that somebody, *anybody,* at last has been put to work at ferreting out the dangerous aliens and their kind who are bold enough even to continue right up to the present time to use our postal service in their underground plottings.

Now it is popularly supposed that our Secret Service, since our entry into the war and before, was devoting its great machinery and its splendid archives to the work of running down spies. The Secret Service was not and is not doing any-

thing of the sort. Under a fool law passed by Congress about ten years ago the Secret Service must confine its activities *solely* to running down and arresting counterfeiters and protecting the person of the President! We have one of the best Secret Service organizations, considering its inadequate size, in the world, and the service has been, especially since the Civil War, adding to its archives until to-day its "rogues' gallery" and kindred photographs and data are of vast value, or would be if the laws of the United States permitted the Secret Service to perform the duties for which it was organized and developed. But it is only by breaking the laws of the United States that the Secret Service can interest itself in spies or any other law-breakers, unless the criminal be a counterfeiter or an assailant of the person of the President. Nevertheless, citizens of the land almost to a man, even trained "crime" reporters on the great metropolitan newspapers, who pride themselves on knowing about every New York police captain by his first name, persist in believing that when a spy or German plotter is arrested his detection was due to the Secret Service. The crime experts of the newspapers always — not usually,

but always — are insisting in print that "an automobile filled with Secret Service men dashed up to the building and arrested Fritz von Frankfürter and his entire office staff on the charge that the Teutons had violated the espionage act." They are not "Secret Service men" who dash up and grab Fritz and his brother felons. The Secret Service men would like nothing so much as an opportunity to devote their talents and equipment to that very work of trailing Fritz and putting him away for a long, long time; but the law says, "No, you must devote your whole energies solely to running down counterfeiters and supplying enough men to guard the President when he takes the air."

During all the sickening months, years, that bombs were bursting on our docks, in our munitions factories, aboard our outbound ships, there were fewer Secret Service men engaged in trying to "get" the perpetrators of these and like crimes throughout the country than there are, by actual count, chorus men in any good-sized Broadway musical comedy; and it was only by subterfuge, by "borrowing" Secret Service operatives from the Treasury Department, which controls the service, that even one Secret Service

man was engaged in spy work. From the days of Boy-Ed and even earlier the Secret Service implored the powers at Washington for permission to swat the spies, but without success. No, they were informed, the Department of Justice would attend to the spies, this despite the fact that the function of the Department of Justice is primarily punitive, not preventive. Wherefore a great untrained body of volunteers in the Department of Justice, thousands of amateur sleuths, straightway began to sherlockholmes and mess round in the muddle, while the very efficient Secret Service men impatiently warmed office-chairs in Washington and New York, praying that the monotony would be varied by a swing round the circle with the President, or that Beppo would begin again to try to coin anemic lead quarters in his cellar in Little Italy, anything that would give the operatives a bit of fresh air. And the administration folk not only told the Secret Service to obey the law that makes it unserviceable, but also warned it to keep secret the fact that it was not permitted to search for spies, since the "public effect would be bad if the people generally were permitted to know that the Secret Service" was not secret-

servicing. But inasmuch as all Germany, any one who cared to look up the law, knew the deplorable conditions that hobble our Secret Service, why not let a general public that pays for the Secret Service have an inkling of the news? Why make a plea of "patriotism" in order to retain on the Federal statutes a law so absurd that the Government is ashamed to admit publicly that the fool statute exists? Why not kick the law into the discard right out in front of everybody? Congress enacted it during the second Roosevelt Administration immediately after it had become known that the Secret Service, for good and sufficient reasons of its own, had been looking into certain activities of a little group of congressmen; and year in and year out, in session after session since the law was passed, for years that number almost a dozen, the Secret Service has tried to get Congress to untie the dangerous hobbles that fasten the feet of the splendid organization. Congress as steadily refuses.

A month or so after we had entered the war the Secret Service clamored so raucously that the administration finally was influenced to find a way round the law whereby a few, a very few,

of the operatives were granted an opportunity to take up spy investigations after a fashion. More recently there has been a slight increase in the number of Secret Service men "borrowed" from the service for this work. May the Government continue to see the light. In the meantime the Secret Service is deplorably hobbled. The loyalty and energy of the Department of Justice enthusiasts are not being questioned here, unless one stops to question the loyal quality of a petty jealousy among some of the Department of Justice men, who resent all attempts of the Secret Service operatives to have a part in the spy investigations.

All of which has been gone into here at some length with the hope that the fatuous man in the street will remember, when he is proudly talking of the radiant qualities of our Secret Service in war-time, that under the law that radiance must be hidden under a bushel-basket; also to remember that the total amount being spent by the Government to maintain *both* the entire Secret Service of the country and the investigating branch of the Department of Justice for a whole year is less than von Bernstorff dealt out gladly in one month to pay for the operation of the Ger-

man Secret Service in New York City alone.

In view of these things, therefore, it is well that among the examples of the new army in Washington are several brilliant men in their thirties and just beyond, noted in their recent mufti days for mental power that lifted them above the herd, who now are giving their days and nights to hard work in the Intelligence Department. As to the number, "several" is the best one can say in trying to foot up the total; the exact number cannot, of course, be told here. Their zeal in their work is sometimes so intense, on duty and off, that it would often be amusing if it were not also so commendable. They don't quite go to the extreme of wearing false whiskers, but the very young among them come close to doing so.

One of their number quite had me thinking for a time that he was the last word in secretiveness. Across his khaki-clad chest he sported a bit of ribbon which indicated that he had seen service in a campaign, but he would not say in what campaign. While the young campaigner and a grizzled old Indian-fighter in the regular army and I were settling world problems in the lobby of a hotel one evening I made it a point to

try to find out just which war of the world he had served through.

"Oh, in one of our Indian wars out West," finally he admitted lightly but would give no details. Secretly I marveled. He was in his mid-thirties, and therefore too young, I thought, to have been a soldier when the redskins took to the war-path, unless he had drawn his sword at about the mature age of eight years at Wounded Knee, which was the last Indian argument worth while that I in my ignorance could recall. The hoary-headed old West Pointer standing with us, who had "fit the Injuns" from the Bad Lands to the Rio Grande in his younger days, snorted with extreme politeness, and then gazed blankly at the "youngster." Evidently the grizzled veteran of the plains marveled over the matter longer than I, for I had forgotten the young captain and his campaign ribbon when, a few days later, I ran into the white-haired regular army officer again.

"That kid's Indian campaign kept me awake nights," cried the old colonel; "so yesterday I decided to look up his record. He 's right; he 's one of these Indian-fighters all right. It seems that a short time back there was a frowzy old chief — he 's probably died since of the D. T.'s —

out in Wyoming who liked his liquor. One Round-Up day this chief, Pink Elephant and his missus, Queen Alice-Sit-By-The-Fire-Water, or whatever her name is,— the old girl doted on the hard stuff, too, and at last accounts was ninety years old and threatened with cirrhosis of the liver,— floated into town and stole a small keg of Cheyenne's best poison. So Pink Elephant and Alice-Sit-By-The-Fire-Water rolled the keg up the Big Lumps to a ledge where Pink Elephant's two sons and Alice's sister, old Aunt Lizzie-Kick-A-Hole-In-The-Sky, were awaiting the return of the travelers.

"After the first long drink out of the keg Pink Elephant and his two sons declared war on the United States of North America. They took a second swig and declared war also on Canada and British Columbia, and after a third round they delivered a final ultimatum which gave Mexico only one hour to accept their terms. Then, with all North America beaten to its knees, Pink Elephant, Alice, Aunt Lizzie, and the boys rolled the remnants of the keg to the highest crag overlooking the reservation, and until far into the night they defied Ireland and Japan also, punctuating their defies with rifle-shots that were

threatening to make fine cut out of the local Indian agent's whole private stock of eating plug.

"They were too far up the crag to send a police-patrol wagon to the high spot to get 'em, so the agent telephoned into town for a squad of National Guardsmen to ride out and end the frightful conflict. Along came the squad, and in the band was this bad Injun-fighter we met in the lobby here the other night. By the time he and the rest of the guardsmen had shinned up the crag, Pink Elephant, Alice-Sit-By-The-Fire-Water, old Aunt Lizzie-Kick-A-Hole-In-The-Sky, and Pink's boys were sleeping the war off; so the guardsmen gathered up the Injuns one by one and poured them all back into the keg. That was the beginning and the end of the great Pink Elephant Uprising, but it seems that this drunk and disorderly case got into the records of the War Department. Therefore it became an Indian War, therefore this lad here is entitled to his bit of baby ribbon across the chest. Yes, *sir*, that young veteran 's got a perfect right to look upon this war with Germany in that kindly way that all old-time campaigners look upon every new scrap that starts."

But let the old regulars of the army and navy

wax sarcastic, the youngsters at least are frantically eager to learn all about their new jobs, which is more than can be said about some of the venerable West-Pointers and Annapolis men who are versed only in the art of war as practised during the smaller scraps of the preceding generation. For one thing, that young man with the harmless bit of ribbon on his proud chest had had during a recent civilian life, like many of his brother officers of the new army now in Washington, a business training which regular officers wholly lack, and the war work at the capital is largely just plain business. The young men from civil life respect the purely military knowledge of the regulars and work hard to absorb some of it; but the set old regular not only has no regard for the volunteer officer as a soldier, but shows no great anxiety to learn the rules of modern business efficiency which many of the volunteers know backward. If the oldsters would only permit the young veteran of the Pink Elephant Uprising and his kind to jump into the work for which they are best fitted, they could do much to relieve the gray-haired regular army majors and colonels and the bald-heads among the navy's departmental officers in Washington

of an immense amount of necessary, but unimportant, detail that the older men still think they must attend to. It is a difficult mater, seemingly impossible, to make the bald-heads understand in Washington that this is a war that necessitates the renunciation of lifelong professional habits, motheaten methods that the older regular officers had been cultivating assiduously from the day they were graduated from West Point or Annapolis up to and including the present war-whirl in Washington.

The "old man" still thinks he must keep up his practice of personally reading all contracts from beginning to end, must read and answer all official correspondence, no matter how trivial, relating to his own particular office business. And he tries to, even with the war-rush piling his desk so high with "business" that if he sat up all night every night,— and some of the regular officers are doing that frequently, too, in their mad efforts to handle personally office work which months ago had passed far beyond the limits of a one-man job,— he could n't begin to take care of a fraction of the new business dumped daily upon his desk.

Perhaps it would not be a bad idea to devise

a new program of training at the capital of a reciprocal nature: while the new officers fresh from civil life are being taught at least the rudiments of purely military knowledge, maybe it would be well to send the old West Point and Annapolis men for an hour or so a day to one or another of the recently created war offices in Washington over which the "captains of industry" preside. There, in the presence of the "dollar-a-year" men at the head of Red Cross or Council of National Defense work, the old army and navy departmental heads might wax wiser merely by sitting still for an hour or so and closely observing the way in which a Henry P. Davison or a Bernard M. Baruch canters right by detail without giving it a passing nod of recognition. The brilliant masters of business technic who have moved Wall Street to Washington so thoroughly that at last America, like other lands, owns a national capital which also has become the real business capital of the country, would no more think of permitting petty detail to interfere, as the military man still insists upon doing, with the magnificent work they are doing in Washington than Henry P. Davison, say, would think of remarking as he entered his old

office in the house of Morgan at Broad and Wall streets, "Boy, bring me all the mail that has been delivered to the firm of J. P. Morgan & Co. during the past twenty-four hours."

It may be recalled that in the old days of a peacefulness that now passeth understanding the regular navy man under his breath always referred to the Naval Reserve militiamen as the "Naval Preserves," and the regular army men looked upon the National Guard as something that was more to be pitied than censured. And now when department offices in Washington are clogged with volunteer officers who never had even militia training, but could write books on business efficiency, the old-time regular is more than ever certain that he personally must do everything, big and little, in his particular military shop. The regular, who for years had not worn a uniform when he could get out of it, whose secret sorrow it is now that he must wear a uniform all the time, gazes scornfully at the fancy fur collars on the new officers' overcoats, at the Sam Brown belts running at a rakish diagonal across swelling chests, at fierce new spurs that never, perhaps, will dig into the flanks of anything more spirited than the varnished oaken

output of Grand Rapids. And to the regular officer these expensive fur collars and natty Sam Brown belts which the new army exults in,— or did until the Government finally stripped these bits of personal vanity from the shoulders of all the grand young army of type-writing dragoons in Washington,— were only concrete evidence that the wearers thereof never could rise to the intellectual heights in the art of war where it becomes necessary to dictate a mighty military message that runs:

"Dear Sir:

"Yours of the 12th inst. regarding price on pint of ink for this office at hand. For the luvva Pete, quit sending prices on pint bottles of ink—send the ink."

It goes without saying that the thought and text of the sample communication just quoted is pure hypothesis. Thoroughly as do the young men wearing brand-new uniforms in Washington know that the business house they have just left undoubtedly would send out for a bottle of ink quite as snappily as that, quite as well, and sadly, do they know that Washington military bureaucracy never would venture upon such snap-

piness. The way one gets a new bottle of ink in the War Department is first to salute and ask one's immediate superior to salute and ask his superior to salute and ask his superior to begin to tune up the entire mass of machinery which must be called into play when a government office needs a fresh bottle of ink. Week by week the campaign to capture the bottle of ink progresses; right arms salute with a whirring as of a great flock of windmills, battery after battery of typewriters are wheeled into action. Then one day a month or two later, as the bottle of ink, panting from its long flight, but still leaping from bough to bough and from crag to crag to escape the lasso of bright crimson tape being flung at its neck — about this time the new young officer who a month before had asked for a bottle of ink calls an office boy to his desk, reaches into his private pay-envelop, and cries, "Jimmy, for Gawd's sake run out and buy me a bottle of ink!" Meanwhile the red tape lasso continues to —

But a mere mention of the crimson tape, the red woolen yarn, and the various other ruddy-hued skeins and spools of entanglements, all piled high for instant use on the dusty depart-

mental shelves in Washington, gives one pause before entering upon a dissertation of the tape entanglements.

One must stop and take a deep breath before touching even lightly upon a few, very few, concrete instances of the great indoor sport of untangling the tape.

CHAPTER VIII

ALL BOUND ROUND WITH A RED WOOL STRING

So slow to start,
So fleet of foot—when far afield!

NOTHING is so impressive round the capital in these days as the speed with which bureaucracy unties the surrounding entanglements of crimson tape long enough to let a new idea in — nothing, perhaps, except the speed with which bureaucracy chucks the new idea right out again.

Take, for example, the case of Barney Flynn of Kenosha, Wisconsin. We shall call him Barney Flynn and say he is from Kenosha because that's his name and that's where he is from. Incidentally, Barney is a living proof that occasionally there is great good even in war contractors. Barney had an idea, which he brought to Washington, and he continued to push his idea through the portals of bureaucracy until he and his idea soon were tangled up in one brand of

red-tape that Houdini himself might hesitate about attempting to untie.

This worst brand of tape is the sort that has stamped all along its length the legend, repeated over and over again, "The department never did anything like that before." Consequently, Barney Flynn was licked before he started, for he had had the audacity to come to town to try to influence the War Department actually to do something which it *never had done before!*

Barney's idea was simplicity itself. Listen. The United States had just entered the World War; it was about to draft an army of hundreds of thousands of young men. Young men must have something to sleep upon at night, especially lads so utterly fagged out as these new soldier boys were sure to be after the untold hours of drill that would be their share in American and European training camps; therefore the department would need hundreds of thousands of new cots; and Barney Flynn had come from Kenosha to Washington to tell the War Department that his firm, which happens to own the largest bed-making plant in the world, could turn out ten thousand of more light steel cots a day, virtually indestructible, at a price considerably *less* per

cot than the department was paying for the flimsy affairs of wood and canvas that probably first came into use during the Second Punic War, and which must be replaced every few weeks.

Keep in mind, please, that the army needed cots in a tremendous hurry, that Barney Flynn could guarantee to turn cots out in a tremendous hurry, that he was offering the War Department the best model of an article to be found in the market for less money than the department was paying for the worst, all of which seems perfectly fair. Also be good enough to remember that these simple facts were all thoroughly known to the cot-buying officials of the War Department. On the face of things it would seem to the average two-legged man that if Barney Flynn were to walk up to a large sorrel horse, blind with cataracts and stone-deaf in both ears, and make such a proposition, the old sorrel nag would still have enough horse sense left to whinny its approval instanter. Ah, little does the average two-legged man realize the importance which bureaucracy places on its unanswerable argument, "We 've never done it before."

The War Department had no cots except a very few of the canvas and wooden contraptions

of antiquity, for which it paid $3.75 apiece. Barney Flynn's cot, made of old railroad steel rerolled, as comfortable as a bed, attractive to the eye and capable of supporting a dead weight of more than three thousand pounds,— all of which Barney demonstrated satisfactorily to the department,— could be purchased from Barney at the rate of ten thousand a day at a cost of only $3.10 each. An order for, say, two hundred thousand of the best cots would mean a saving to the department of over $130,000 as compared with an order for the same number of worst cots, not to mention the immeasurable economy in buying a cot that would have to be replaced every few weeks.

Even before Barney had breezed into Washington all these indisputable facts had been hammered at bureaucracy. The top-notch salesmen of Barney's firm had bobbed up in the capital immediately upon the outbreak of war, and with confidence in their innocent hearts had told the department all. If the salesmen had had a bit more experience with the methods of what has not inappropriately been called "Washington, B. C.," they would have known that if a thing "never has been done before," it is next to im-

possible to find a bureau chief who offhand will do it. There ain't no such animal. The cot salesmen should have remembered the experiences of predecessors innumerable who vainly had tried to offer the Government the first successful Lewis gun, the first successful submarine, and uncounted other first successful military ideas which Americans of initiative sadly had to wrap up again, and then successfully peddle to some other Government. And so the crack salesmen were compelled to decamp from Washington in disgust and sadly break the news to Barney Flynn that the directing military-supplies gentleman of a cotless army, which was about to enter the greatest war, had refused even to discuss the self-evident fact that countless cots of some sort would have to be purchased immediately. The heap big chiefs at Washington, so the salesmen reported, had listened blankly to all the details offered, and then had solemnly turned away and resumed silently the chewing of the cud.

"Well, men," said Barney Flynn, "I'm not a regular salesman, but I think I'll buy me a one-way ticket to Washington and stick round there for a spell." Whereupon into Washington from Kenosha slid Barney across a rainbow of

hope. As proof that when an idea does get far enough past the outer red-tape entanglements its progress is rapid, one has only to be told that very few Washington days and nights had passed over the fair, but beaded, brow of Barney Flynn before he had brought bureaucracy round to the point where it was giving vent to spoken words. Instead of listening blankly and then turning away in silence to resume the cud-chewing, Barney in time had progressed so far that a first lord of the army bedchamber opened his mouth long enough to say, "No!"

Thus encouraged, Barney Flynn sat up most of that night in his hotel room in Washington arranging photographs, blue prints, a prospectus describing his cot, and then sat round for another hour while trying to marshal a string of effective arguments into line. But try and try as he would, Barney could think of only one silly old argument: that his idea of offering the best article for less money than the prospective customer was paying for the worst had an element of common sense concealed in it somewhere. Barney stormed the portals of bureaucracy again and again and again. He varied his daily struggles through the red-tape entanglements one aft-

ernoon by bringing along a little army he had drafted himself — about a score of husky workmen of an average weight of 165 and a fraction pounds. He set up one of his cots for the edification of bureaucracy, and then commanded eighteen units of his little army — a total weight of 2976 pounds of humanity, or all that could find a foothold on the springs — to stand on the cot simultaneously. And the eighteen stoop upon the assembled cot, the human overhang of the grinning group clasping one another about the waist to keep its balance; and the suspended cot-springs held the great weight without a single strand of steel wire showing any signs that the cot had begun to rip, ravel, or run down at the heel.

Straightaway bureaucracy decided that this persistent Barney person must be squelched. If a thunderous "No"! delivered each day with increasing volume, would not rid the department of his presence, it was time that the final step was taken. Down from a dusty shelf bureaucracy took a phonograph record of its pet argument, all bound round with red-woolen string, and after dusting it off began to let it squeak its rusty-throated refrain: "Your idea has its mer-

its, but — it has never been done before." And then one morning when Barney Flynn strolled into the department to spend the day as usual, listening to the record squeak and squeak, a first lord of the army bedchamber greeted him with brand-new animation. On the bureaucrat's face was a smile that glows best on the face of a man who realizes that for some time he has been merely stubborn, but suddenly has hit upon an argument that really is unanswerable.

"Flynn," cried Bureaucracy, triumphantly, "your cot is impossible. We 've learned that your cot would take up about twice as much room in the hold of a freighter as the canvas cot. Of course whatever cot we buy will have to be shipped abroad in great quantities. In these days of ship shortage lack of bulk is all important."

And genius having spoken, the office boy held the door open wide for the final exit of Barney Flynn.

"Interesting, but unimportant," said Barney, removing his overcoat and pulling up a chair. "What 's the life of a canvas cot?"

"Ninety days."

"What 's the life of one of our steel cots?"

"Er — years; indefinite, I take it."

"Well, for once you take it right. Ships carrying the canvas cots to France would have to cross the ocean four times a year to keep the initial shipment replenished. The same fleet of freighters, loaded with steel cots, would make the trip once, and never have to make it again for the same purpose as long as the war lasted. So that ends that argument. Come! come! come! it's your next shot."

"Well — er — as we've told you repeatedly, Flynn, you are suggesting an idea which never has been tried in the whole history of this department." Which left the entire matter back where it had been before God made iron and man made steel. And in the meantime the patter of thousands on thousands of the toddling feet of the new young, grand young Army of the Republic could be heard as it began to approach from afar off, and it had not a crib in which to lay its head.

Zowie! Suddenly upon Washington burst Julius Rosenwald as head of the supplies department of the Advisory Commission of the Council of National Defense.

"Cots!" cried Julius.

"We make 'em," said Barney.

"What kind?" said Julius.

"Best for least," said Barney.

"How fast?" said Julius.

"Ten thousand a day," said Barney.

"Then why in the name of God and America do you stand around here *talking* about them?" screamed Julius. "Make 'em! dammit! *make* 'em!"

Barney Flynn's office equipment is his hat and the handiest long-distance telephone operator. He grabbed his hat, and in one jump landed feet first in a telephone-booth. And as he is the only person in the world who can squeeze comparatively quick service out of the Washington telephone company, it was not so indecently long a time before he was talking to the home plant in the middle West and telling the boss that he had better begin to rout out the night shift, inasmuch as the factory had just got a little order that might take up a lot of the boys' spare moments. As the result of a brief talk with a genius among merchants, who, throughout a career that had placed him in the forefront of a nation of mighty commercial geniuses, never had spurned goods because they happened to be the

best for the least money, Barney Flynn had received an initial order for five hundred thousand of his cots at $3.10 each, a saving of 65 cents on each cot for the War Department, or a total saving, as compared with an order for the same number of cots of the Second Punic War type, of $325,000 on this first order alone. If the steel cots had been sold at a dollar more apiece than the old cots they would have been worth the money to the army. Almost before Barney could get the Washington exchange to put his second long-distance call through to the home plant he had sold the army $3,000,000 worth of cots, once real business had taken bureaucracy by the throat and had shaken some sense into it. Then Barney evolved a hospital "bed" from the humble framework of his cot, lengthened the legs of the cot and ran a metal rod high above the springs to support mosquito netting, and he promptly sold the Government an initial consignment of a quarter of a million of the hospital cots also. And only a few additional weeks of our war preparations had come and gone when the light little steel cots were forming real beds for weary soldier boys throughout the sixteen national training camps, the sixteen National

Army cantonments, and steadily were, and still are, being shipped to France. Doubtless of vast importance is the fortune saved on each order for the new cots, but of much more interest to all of us is a comment from the front concerning these cots which recently I happened upon. It means more than mere fortunes, because it tells of added rest and content which cots that bureaucracy had spurned are bringing to our soldier boys in France. The comment on the cots occurred in the opening sentences of a letter from an American lad abroad which was published in a New York newspaper[1] during our first war winter.

"Dear Jo-Jo, Jo and Joe," the letter began, "our present camp is far superior to our first [in France]. We sleep in little iron beds, and I tell you the boys feel mighty good at the idea of going to bed for the first time in four months!"

In view of which one might say that Barney Flynn, who merely stood and waited, also served.

But, unfortunately, they are not all Barney Flynns, these war-order folk who form a great part of the boom-town element which clutters up

[1] New York *Evening Sun*, January 2, 1918.

the capital. Weaving through the crowds in hungry fashion, in the hotel lobbies, the streets, clamoring for audience before the seats of the mighty, are the profiteers, in numbers so ostentatious that their omnivorous omnipresence has caused Washington to coin the excellent word "patrioteer." And cheek by jowl with the patrioteers, brothers in spirit, are unnumbered inventors of the claptrap class. These, too, jam the corridors and entrances as they chatter of the merits of their particular patented camp-kit, belt buckle, or what not, which as a rule would be useful to no one except the inventor. If adopted by the Government, the knickknack in a day would put the inventive promoter in the enviable state where annually he could swear off his war taxes.

And then there is the other kind of "inventor," he of the long hair and baggy clothes and moody countenance, pathetic souls who, like most of the rest of us, differ from the admittedly insane chiefly in the matter of residence. Let a yelp of excitement arise in any place in the land, and straightway the half witted will flock toward the uproar. Elijah Dowie had n't been in Manhattan a day when Carrie Nation, the gentleman

who knew himself as "John the Baptist the Second," and all the rest of the grand army of crackpates were coursing up and down Broadway. And so the cordons of red-tape round the bureaucracies have at least one merit: they keep the half witted and their cracked ideas without the portals; if one of them got far enough indoors he might have his "idea" adopted by some bureaucrat who, if he had a little more brains, would be half witted himself. One wonders where these poorly clad, underfed "inventors" scraped together the car-fare to join the crowd that forms the new capital or how they live when they get there. To these poor devils the development of a counter-irritant for the U-boat peril seems chiefly to absorb their "thought." Nets projecting round the water-line of transports, notions quite as absurd about "magnetizing" the U-boats and so rendering them helpless, these and similar suggestions form by far the greater part of the stock of intellectual contributions which they seek to bring personally to the attention of the Naval Consulting Board. It should be said in passing that Rear-Admiral William Strother Smith and his associates at the head of the inventions section of the new Naval Con-

sulting Board, and their co-workers in the inventions branch of the army, now are welcoming any and all suggestions; for tucked away in the silliest notion sometimes may be found the germ of a valuable idea.

One of the crackpates I met up with had blue prints of a war-ship which was to revolutionize navigation. Away with elaborate engines for marine motive power; just rig up a powerful pump in the ship, and the thing was done! Below the water-line of the bow of the ship designed by this particular genius was to be a big round hole, with a similar hole below the water-line at the stern. The bow hole and the opening at the stern respectively were to form the entrance and exit of a great steel pipe which was to run the length of the hold. And attached to the pipe-line was to be a pump of tremendous suction power, which would draw the water into the pipe at the bow and send it out the stern opening, a racing "cable" or "rope" of water which would pull the ship along at incredible speed. It was a cute little idea and extremely simple.

And then I got into conversation with still another who had a scheme for wiping out the whole German navy in one quick moment, if the Gov-

ernment would but listen to him. All he wanted the navy to do was to cut all the Atlantic cables quietly, close to the European shore, and then have the eastern ends of the cables picked up and hurriedly towed westward with great speed and secrecy. Next these loose ends of the cables were to be fastened to some good strong West Indian island capable of standing the strain, and the cables were to be stretched tautly, leaving them in long strings just below the surface of the ocean and not far out from and generally parallel with the Atlantic coast of the United States. Powerful mines were to be attached to the strings of cables, so close together that no fleet of ships could sail over the cables without some vital part of each vessel being compelled to pass directly above at least one of the mines. Then, when all was set, and all the mines had been connected up with electric wiring, a swift American fleet was to cross the Atlantic and steam so tantalizingly close to the German coast that the whole German grand fleet would dash forth to give battle. Instantly the American fleet was to turn tail and flee for home harbors; and just as the pursuing German fleet was crossing above the mine-laden cables — pop! pop! pop! and the

whole German navy would — But the details of the horribly bloody slaughter are too sickening to go into here. The idea presented only one possibility that prevented it from being perfect: maybe the German fleet would not come out!

Now, here was a genius who had a suggestion which had one thing in common with Barney Flynn's idea — neither had "ever been done before." Red-tape, or the stupidity which always is the concomitant of red-tape, had treated both ideas the same and barred them. The insane man and the man with the real idea were identical in the eyes of bureaucracy. Therefore bureaucracy does not reason, therefore never is right except by accident; and the present is the last time in the history of the world to set any store on accident.

How War Department bureaucracy can coddle an unimportant bit of picayune official procedure and exalt it to the high dignity of an unbreakable norm is best illustrated by the recent experiences in Washington of one of the country's foremost authorities on the science of forestry, a science, alas! in which the nation is woefully deficient in knowledge and worse in practice. The scientist

in mind was anxious to place his splendid stock of special knowledge at the service of a warring United States, wherefore he was overjoyed upon receiving an urgent appeal from highest officers on America's battle-line in France, who knew of his remarkable mental equipment and energy, to hurry through the formalities of getting a commission and then join them as quickly as possible abroad. The American soldiers of very high rank had seen as soon as they arrived within earshot of the German guns in France that this leader in the science of forestry could render the American Army abroad a certain service they had in mind in better fashion than any man in all America.

The forestry expert, so the army men had explained when sending for him, first would have to get his commission before he would be able to work properly with the army on the big job that had been mapped out for him by the general officers abroad. Immediately the scientist, who is not old and is in perfect health, went before an army surgeon in Boston for his physical examination. The surgeon noted a defect in the scientist's left eye. Yes, admitted the potential major, that left eye was n't of much use and had n't been

since childhood; nevertheless, it never had interfered, he added, with the quality and quantity of his work, a fact self-evident from the high place he had taken in his profession. And then he told in detail who it was that had asked, almost commanded him to come into the service, the urgency of the need of his services in France, and the additional detail that the circumstance of the foggy left eye was known to the officers abroad who had sent for him. And the army surgeon in Boston, who figuratively was as far from the War Department's red-tape counter and its influences as the officers in France were, was still a normal human being. He "passed" the scientist quickly, gave him a clean bill of health. Promptly the forestry man wound up his affairs, got his commission, and bought his khaki clothes with the little gold leaf on the shoulders. And then after kissing his young wife and two children good-by in Boston, he jumped into a taxicab headed for the South Station, and immediately made a serious blunder: he bought a ticket that would take him to Washington.

He did n't want to go to Washington, he had to go. Preliminary work on his new job kept him there until the eve of the day he was to sail

for France, kept him there so close to his sailing-time, in fact, that he had to bring his wife and children to the capital for the final farewell. Then, just before he was to board the train that was to take him to his point of embarkation for France, he and a little group of brother-officers who were to accompany him abroad went through the military etiquette of calling at the War Department to make a formal visit of brevity in the office of their immediate superiors before leaving for France. There was a pleasant little function of a few minutes' duration, handshakes, a word of good luck and farewell from the superiors, then the open door leading to the avenue and the glories of fair France.

The new major was in the act of backing respectfully out the open door. Ah, little did he know that on the instant one of those little bearded *Glooms* that Tom Powers scatters about his caricatures had, with saturnine grimace, stretched a tiny thread of red-woolen string above the door-sill to trip him. And at the moment he was beginning to feel the corridor air currents on the back of his neck, just when he was thinking that the superior officer had played his last Victor record and was all fin-

ished, the red string caught him in the back of the legs, and he was hamstrung!

"One — mo-ment, Majah," cried the superior, precisely as Columbus on another occasion had blurted suddenly to the second mate, "Hist! Can the chatter, mate! Damme! I see the gables of a summer-resort hotel!" "One — mo-*ment!* What 's wrong with your left eye?"

It was foggy, explained the new Majah. Furthermore, it always had been foggy. Its fogginess never had interfered in the slightest with the Majah's work. A general officer whose name is now a household word in America knew that left eye intimately, added the Majah, when despatching word to him to hurry to France.

Wrong, all wrong; and with the feverishness that is noticeable in our best bureaucratic circles only when a real idea steps within range of the trusty old blunderbuss, the boss dug into the dust until he had brought to light the jolly old Rule Book, Vol. I, No. 1, which had been celebrated as a best seller in Government circles during the War of 1812. No, siree! Lookit, Majah! It says right here in print, at this here page, marked with the faded, old red baby ribbon, that no man with one defective eye may be sent into active

service, because if he were to lose the other eye he would " become a charge on the Government." And gosh! Majah, you had almost got out that door! Whew!

Is that the only reason, Boss, for not letting a man with one defective eye tackle this job?

Yep, and it 's enough, sir. Any rule that is a rule must be right or it would n't be a rule.

But listen, Fathead,— I mean Field Marshal; pardon me,— the rule does n't apply to me.

How so?

Because I am independently wealthy; because I am gladly giving up a large part of my income to perform this needed service; because, if I lost my perfect eye, the loss would be of financial benefit to me, inasmuch as for reasons I have n't time to go into now, Boss,— I 'll miss my train if I don't get out of here soon,— I can make more money stone-blind at home here than I can serving with at least one perfect eye in France; because — oh, dammit! because you insult me when you say that I would make the Government support me if I were injured in France. Great heavens, Boss, do you mean to stand there and insist that the War Department, *at a time like this,* believes that a line of ancient

type in that faded old almanac of 1812 is of more importance than a big job well done for the boys in France?

Ab-so-lute-ly, Majah! Tear up your passport, Majah; you 're down — out — through.

But, Boss, let me have a final word: I 'm not a "soldier"; I don't make any pretense at being a military man. My soldier clothes, even my commission, are only mere technicalities, simply a part of the formalism, all necessary, no doubt, that must be gone through with before I can begin to unload my stock of intellectual goods at the point in the field where the army stands most in need of my —

Hush, Majah! We executives have massive work here to do, and you are delaying it. Majah, this way out.

And so the great services of that particular expert were lost to the lads in France, who needed him then and need him immeasurably more now. Bureaucracy would not permit him to tackle his job then, and it has not changed its "mind" since.

In justice to red-tape, it must be said that nothing can show greater speed and efficiency in accomplishing what it sets out to do than the

down to the last botched detail. Old Man Bureaucrat himself ordered 330,000 doors and 660,000 windows in a jiffy, quite overlooking the fact that the windows as ordered were not of the necessary standard size. Also the old boy, who daily was growing to look more like a bottle in that all his development was from the neck down, had ordered doors designed with the perpendicular panels of other days. Doors like that look lovely in the quaint old colonial homes of Salem, but it so happened that the mills which were to turn out the big order of doors for the cantonment shacks were equipped with machinery installed with the idea of making doors designed along the lines of the horizontal panels of modernity; and before the order could be filled the mill machinery would have to be ripped out and replaced. Fortunately, some one with at least a teaspoonful of gray matter woke up with a yawn at high noon and corrected the door and window errors at the last minute.

Even *ship-building* was delayed by red-tape entanglements long after bureaucracy, politics, and everything else under heaven had ceased brawling and chattering its monkey-language squabble

And then there is the other kind of "inventor"

as to what material the ships were to be built of. The preliminaries for the construction and operation of government shipyards at Bristol Point, Hog Island, and Port Newark were attended to with commendable alacrity, and then the contracts for building the yards where the ships were to be fashioned were all drawn up by General Goethals. Meanwhile, in that particular week, and the next, and the week after that, and then for a stretch of many more weeks, the U-boats merrily were paving the floor of the ocean with anything in the shipping line that happened over the western horizon; and while those weeks stretched on and on and on several sweet old grandmothers in trousers sat in their Washington offices with their tatting in their laps, knitting skein after skein of bright-red yarn into cocoons that held the contracts splendidly inactive. To strip enough red yarn off those contracts to permit even the *signing* of the contracts took four months.

Officers fresh from civil life, whose whole training, therefore, had been in another world, where red-tape and sand in the cylinders are synonymous, were put to work by the surgical branch of the army to select sites and complete

the preliminary arrangements for erecting receiving hospitals for the wounded lads momentarily expected to arrive from France. Promptly they decided upon the sites and finished their work up to the actual first steps in building. Then they stood round expectantly, eager for grandma to make the next move. The autumn of 1917 came and went. Grandma glanced up from her tatting long enough to note that snow had begun to fill the December air. In time she had the withered old Christmas-tree taken out in the back yard and burned. The new year was growing from swaddling clothes to pinafores, to knickers; and all along the sodden fields of France the guns were thundering, and the lads from Painted Post and Louisville and Valley Stream were tumbling forward, their arms limp or shattered, legs ripped off by shrapnel, their jaws in bloody shreds. Dogs, even dogs, *ran* into hell to help them; but the sleek old grandmas tatted and tatted, deaf to the frantic appeals of onetime physicians and laymen, now in uniform, who ages before had selected the sites for receiving hospitals that still were vacant lots, still just blank real estate.

"The hospitals must be built *some* time,"

pleaded the officers over the long-distance telephones from far cities. "Why not *now*? Any moment a shipload of the wounded will arrive!"

"Don't speak out of your turn, boys," grandma replied sternly. "We shall take up the matter you speak of, whatever it is, when the proper time comes." What was promptness in caring for the lads soon to come back to the motherland, bent and broken forever, compared with preserving intact the "system" of glorious pomposity which to grandma is the beginning and end of things as they were!

No mere volume could begin even to list the hospitals, the building materials, the ships, shoes sealing-wax, and the lives that red-tape strangled in the first weeks of the war, in the months that followed, and is continuing to strangle at the present time. That new major, whose necessary knowledge of forestry had been so lightly spurned parted from bureaucracy, I know, crestfallen and almost ashamed of his own people,

So slow to start,
So fleet of foot—when far afield!

But as he went out the door, bureaucracy sighed again easily, for had it not once more slipped

the rotting red-tape round the neck of common sense and sprung the trap? and, bravo! the ancient strands again had withstood the strain.

But some day soon — halleloojah! it 's dawning now — the noose and scaffold will disappear; and Old Man Bureaucracy will be awakened at gray dawn and learn, as he puts on the plain black suit laid out for him, that the right leg of the trousers has been slit from the ankle stitching to a point just above the knee; and in the half-light of the breaking day they will lead him, with much chantings, through a little doorway and seat him in a plain oaken chair equipped with spiral wires, wet sponges, many straps, and a dangling headpiece of thick leather. And then while the chantings drone on, every one will step back a safe pace to the surrounding mats of gray rubber, and the blue-white juice will be turned on forever, and a curl of smoke will arise from his short hair. I have seen the thing done in all its sickening detail in the death house at Sing Sing — done to murderers who had killed only *one* man, who as a rule was of the murderer's own vile kind. And before many more have been added to the untold number of magnificent lads who have already suffered, died, that pomposity

might prevail, the thing will be done to a bureaucracy wherein a "system" of crass stupidity and wretched stubbornness still continues to nurture these murderers of young American manhood.

CHAPTER IX

THE WAR AND THE WHITE HOUSE

NOBODY home — that is the feel in the air in and about the White House in these days of war. Gone is the hurly-burly of the Roosevelt days, of even the earlier ante-bellum days of the Wilson régime; gone the visiting brides and grooms who used to stroll along the now-deserted winding walks. Whether one wanders indoors among the semi-abandoned executive office furnishings or peers from afar through the iron fence at the graceful white façade, the feeling persists that perhaps the white walls house a crackly old parchment containing the Constitution or some such abstraction; but otherwise nobody home. To-day I saw a secretary's office and the President's office adjoining, which once upon a time were swarming with people, but are now silent, deserted, a vast gloom. The very policemen stationed on the grounds — and in these war days there are more than half a hundred of them

partly concealed in and round the White House — are carefully crated in lonely-looking sentry-boxes that fit as tightly across the shoulders as a thirty-five dollar Harlem flat.

To-night, here in the little hotel room for which the wife and I had to keep up a drum-fire for two nights and a day to get, I can't help but make a mental contrast of things I have seen in and around the White House to-day with something else that happened on a night in recent years in the same business end of the Executive Mansion, or what was once the business end of it. The incident of a few years ago which comes to mind to-night was only one of many which once made the large secretarial office in which Mr. Tumulty now has his desk hum along happily day by day. To-day that rectangular office, and particularly the circular office adjoining which the President now rarely uses, especially drove home the feeling that one had sacrilegiously stepped into the sanctified cheerlessness of the horror known in New England as the "spare bedroom." On the night I have in mind — it was during the second Roosevelt administration — a group of the Washington correspondents of New York newspapers, their work finished for

the night, were sitting with the then President's secretary in the rectangular office. Most of them were sitting on their spines, chairs tilted back, feet cocked ceilingward into the clouds of tobacco smoke, while in hushed tones — it was almost midnight — they talked of an editorial which that morning had appeared in New York's most brilliantly written newspaper. Dislike of the President and all things Rooseveltian had driven the editor man to the extreme of suggesting that the high-priced alienists who were looking into the sanity of a noted murderer then on trial in New York might better be giving their time and talents to inquiring into the sanity of a noted personage in Washington.

"All day we 've been busy keeping that newspaper out of the President's way," whispered the secretary. "The colonel is all run down and jumpy from too much work, and if he ever read that editorial he 'd come nearer going crazy than even that editorial writer tries to make believe he —"

A loud laugh, coming from a corridor leading to the interior of the White House, interrupted the secretary. Hurried steps approached. The door was pushed open with a rush, and into the

tobacco smoke of the secretary's office burst an excited personage with a copy of the New York newspaper in his hand. It was the President of the United States. Correspondents and the secretary jumped to their feet respectfully.

"I 've got under their skins! I 've hurt 'em!" cried the Colonel, grinning beatifically, exultingly, smacking his hand on the newspaper. "Look at this, boys! I 've got 'em on the mat, where the best they can do is yell that I 'm crazy. By George! that 's bully!" And a President who had been ordered to climb under the quilts as early as possible every night during those days of overworked and frazzled nerves sat down happily amid the tobacco clouds and, himself quite one of the boys, chatted with Dick and Hank and Sam and the rest of the lads in chummy fashion. Doubtless if one of them had suggested that the President jam on his slouch-hat and walk a part of the way home with the correspondent before turning in, he would have done it.

Fancy the present occupant of the White House bursting in upon a group of reporters at midnight, or at noon, and sitting down to chat in chummy fashion! Let some one else fancy it; I can't. There was only one day — March 5,

1913 — when, so far as can be recalled, anything approaching chumminess enlivened the offices of the present President and his secretary, those rooms which in recent months have almost gone into the silences. On that March day Mr. Wilson put his feet for the first time under the Presidential desk which now he rarely sees. Also it was the first day on which Mr. Bryan attempted to be a Secretary of State. Visiting delegations came and went every minute on the minute, each group headed by a beaming charter member of the Society of the First Man to Suggest Woodrow Wilson's Name for President. The office of the President and the Tumulty office connected with it were aglow with cut flowers, potted plants, and the Hon. J. Ham Lewis arrayed in the flossiest of springtime creations. In and out through the doorway that connected the two offices, pattering and chattering and beaming like a small boy with a brand-new little red wagon to play with, flitted the new Secretary of State, his freshly-varnished three-quart high hat tilted far back from his beaded brow, so that just a fringe of his heavy-tragedian locks stuck out abaft the overhang of the three-quart tile. As the newest Secretary of State paused at times long enough to

gather a fresh batch of the delegations about him, one's thoughts persisted in going back to boyhood scenes on a Saturday night in the old home town up-State; the old horse-drawn victoria standing close to the curb at the corner of Main and Washington streets; a smoky torch-light flaring above the driver's seat; cartons containing dollar bottles of Kickapoo Indian Sawga Pain Exterminator and Hair Restorer piled high about a gentleman wearing long black hair and a three-quart polished hat. Step closer, men. First a little song and banjo music, good pee-pul, and then, men, I shull demunstrate the marvelous pain-killing propaties of this great remedy handed down to us, men, by the wise old medicune men of the great Kickapoo Indian tribe!

There was a human touch, back on that faraway March day in an era of now unbelievable peacefulness, in those same White House rooms, a picnicy atmosphere, a twittering of happy excitement akin to commencement day in a boys' boarding-school. There was a festiveness that made even the sartorial outbursts of the Hon. J. Ham Lewis seem as appropriate as the golds and brocades on a circus elephant. One even caught a glimpse of the new President's very coat-tails

as his exuberant Secretary of State darted in and out through the connecting door — a door that seemed to give the mere onlooker a sort of intimate touch with greatness, but at the same time suggested walled seclusion which held the proletariate a million miles away from the immediate person of the pee-pul's choice.

But now! Ah, now is something else again! To-day as I approached the White House fence I remembered having been told that even the grounds were closed to all but the chosen. Had n't visiting writing-folk said in print that no one can get into government buildings in Washington during these war-days, least of all approach the White House doors, unless one owns a pass decorated with the owner's photograph? I remembered having read such articles, decorated with half-tones showing Government guards holding back the potential visitors while scrutinizing the photographs on the passes. True, only the day before I had walked boldly into the north entrance of the State, War, and Navy building without passes, photographs, influence, letters, or even personal acquaintanceship with a single soul inside the building, and merely by asking permission to see a soldier in

the War Department whose name I had once heard mentioned, but who did not know that I so much as existed, I had been permitted to wander, unaccompanied, down a corridor and into an office in the innermost recesses of the War Department. And half an hour later, in quite the same care-free manner, I had penetrated to the desks of men supervising the new war inventions in a little building across the way that houses an overflow of the consulting board of the navy.

Still, the feeling was ingrained that I could n't get into the White House grounds, not to mention the executive offices of the White House. Perhaps the guards, however,— thus I mused today, or almost a year since our war declaration, as I walked toward the White House,— will permit me to stand near enough to the north curb of Pennsylvania Avenue to holler the news through a megaphone that years ago, when I was a Jersey City commuter, I had become well-enough acquainted with the Hon. Joseph Patrick Tumulty to walk right up to him and cry, "Well, bless us and save us, if here ain't Joe!" And maybe Joe would open a window or something and wave to me, or even go so far as to step outside for a moment and —

Heavens! I came out of my musings with a jerk, and found myself standing inside the White House grounds. With my head bowed and dreaming, I had become so concentrated upon all these weighty matters that thoughtlessly, mechanically, I had walked through the wide-open west gate leading to the President's offices, as wide open as the gates on the north side were carefully closed; and I had pulled myself out of my state of coma only upon finding myself standing within a dozen feet of the door leading to the executive offices in the west wing of the White House. Horror of horrors! a lone, but brawny, Washington cop was sleepily propped on the driveway, his back to me and seemingly in the throes of gazing in fixed fashion into some large land of nothingness lying back of nowhere. I had come leagues inside the White House grounds without realizing it; unconsciously I had passed behind the broad back of the policeman and now was closer to the door than the officer was. Gosh! Suppose he should whirl about, see me, and fire before asking questions!

"Uh-uh-uh-uh officer!" I cried. Oh, I was scared all right! And hurriedly I started to address him, so that he would realize that it was

only by accident that I had got so close to a White House door. "Officer!" I called again, and he turned round lazily and regarded me without showing any slight trace of absorbing interest in me or my travels. "Uh — officer, I — I wish to find the President's offices. Uh — Secretary Tumulty — he —"

"Well," broke in the bluecoat in withering tones, "there 's the door in front of you,"— as who would say: "Yuh got yur foot on the 'Welcome' sign on the doormat. Whatcha want me to do, yuh poor fish? *CARRY* yuh in?"

I backed away scared, and instantly brought myself up sharply with another start. I was inside. Seated in a sort of reception-lobby was a middle-aged person who was quite as well acquainted with me as I am with the Akhund of Swat. But, so I decided the instant he frowned upon me, he 'll know me in a minute, and never will he permit me to pass beyond him into the executive offices; for the secretary's office opens into the President's office, which opens into a corridor, which in turn leads into the living-rooms of the White House. He 'll list my pedigree for three generations back; he 'll make me unroll my folded newspaper to make sure that it does n't

contain a length of gas-pipe plugged at each end; and finally he 'll hold me head downward by the heels and shake me, following which he undoubtedly will kick me violently back into whatever part of the Pennsylvania Avenue asphalt he thinks I should be decorating. And I had no pass, no card of introduction to save me; nothing. If he would only begin! But he stared silently.

"Er — I — I should like to see Secretary Tumulty, sir."

"He 's out, I believe," remarked the gentleman of the iron-gray hair. "Go through the doorway back there and ask inside."

Through a wide-arched passageway I walked, and came upon a young man standing in a small corridor. He knew me as well as I knew him, which was not at all. Again I asked to be admitted to Secretary Tumulty's office.

"Second door to your left," directed the young man, with a thumb-jerk. "I think he 's out. Wait in his office till he comes in, if you care to."

Wherefore within a few seconds I found that I had sauntered without interruption from the asphalt of outdoors into the veloured and carpeted and leather-bound elegancies, "rich, but not

"Second door to your left," directed the young man with a thumb jerk

gaudy," of the office of the secretary to the President. There I sat, alone and unguarded, beside the door which leads into the President's office, which leads into a corridor, which leads into the innermost quarters of the White House. Alone and lonely. Now, on my visit to the War Department yesterday I at least was n't lonely as I sat beside the vacant desk of a major and waited for him to come back from luncheon. I had found three other strange majors seated at three of the four desks in that little office, each with a girl stenographer by his side. And after one of the majors had looked up impersonally and had told me to pull up a chair and kill time as best I could until the missing major returned, all three majors had resumed their work of dictating letters in conversational tones to the girl stenographers. How could one be lonely with three unknown gentlemen unfolding the War Department's correspondence aloud at one's elbow in a room the size of a hotel bedroom?

But to-day as I sat in Mr. Tumulty's temporarily deserted office the only entertainment I could think of was to sit there and debate with myself how many lashes of the knout I should give to young Dave Lawrence and the rest of the

Washington writer lads who had given me the scare of my life with their articles and pictures illustrating the terrors awaiting a stranger like myself who would dare to brave the supposititious barbed-wire entanglements in front of Washington govermental entrances. One hundred lashes, Ivan; twenty-five for the little scare of yesterday in front of the jolly old State, War, and Navy building, and thrice that many for the greater scare at the White House to-day. Likely as not, so I now naturally decided, foreign writers had been misleading all of us about similar conditions abroad. Likely as not, if a total stranger, visiting Berlin in war-time, wanted to get into the office immediately next to the one containing the kaiser's work-bench, all the stranger would have to do would be to walk along Main street, Berlin, until the kaiser's street number was reached and then stroll inside without knocking, as in Washington, and wander round the works until one happened upon the butler. Ah, Looie, you 're growing thin. Is the boss home, Looie? He 's out? Well, I 'll just meander on toward the private offices, Looie, and stick round there till the kaiser or somebody

shows up. By the way, I 'm an American, Looie. You forgot to ask me, you naughty, naughty butler, just as the doorman at the White House forgot to ask me whether or not I was a German the last time I strolled into our own national executive offices at Washington. Now beat it, Looie. I want to sit here alone in the anteroom of the kaiser's quarters, because if he should chance along I want to see him alone and quick and *first!* Yes, that 's just what would happen in Berlin. If here, why not there?

In my loneliness to-day I was tempted to turn the knob an arm's-length away and kill time by puttering round the President's desk in the office adjoining. Or perhaps I could stroll on into the corridor leading to the White House living-rooms until I came upon some good snappy book or magazine that would help me kill time till some one showed up. Before I left I did go into the adjoining office, properly escorted, and sat at the desk and gazed upon vacuity. And if the flowers and highly varnished solemnities of the secretary's office suggested the death-chamber of a Past Grand Exalted Ruler of the Elks, then the deserted room next to it surely made one feel

that the late lamented Elk or Eagle recently had been removed to the dear old clubhouse for the final obsequies.

Finally I heard a human voice, two of them. I could n't see the humans, and they could n't see me, but I could hear their type-writers begin to click and, as they chatted across their desks or answered the frequent ringing of a telephone bell, the sound of their voices came to me from the recesses of an arched passage out in the general direction of the street door by which I had entered. They seemed to have no fear that the President would wander at any moment from the seclusion of his living-rooms into his own office end of the White House; no thought that he would burst in among them excitedly, newspaper in hand, and boom dee-lightedly, "By George! boys, here 's something bully!" The two unseen clerks just went on clicking and telephoning; and from the nature of the telephone talks it was evident that about every one in Washington and the world was trying to "get into touch" with one or another of the President's official family, chiefly with the Secretary of the Treasury. On a conservative guess, nine out of every ten persons who call up Secretary Tumulty's office are sure

that the success of the war hangs largely upon the speed with which they are "put in touch" with Secretary McAdoo. It is a notable fact that within ten days after Mr. McAdoo had been placed in charge of the country's railways his mail contained about ten thousand "personal" letters, half of them telling him how to run his job and the other half asking permission, for a consideration, to share his job with him.

But if distant clicks and telephone bells were the only indications of activity round the White House, it always should be borne in mind that an appalling amount of work had been done there since morning, especially by the distinguished head of the house himself. Hours earlier he had taken up the systemized tasks which are the penalty of holding down so colossal a job as the Presidency of the greatest country fighting, or finally getting ready to fight, in the world's mightiest war. For with the possible exception of the Rev. Billy Sunday, not a man in Washington to-day, yesterday, every day, works harder to earn the little yellow pay-envelop than the Hon. Woodrow Wilson.

Take yesterday as an example, or go back to the night before last. After a day as busy as all

the rest he had dined at seven, and then, in the seclusion of his study in the heart of the White House, he had labored until almost midnight over the final draft of a momentous message wherein were stated the only possible peace terms which America would consider. In that secluded study he keeps, especially since his virtual abandonment of the office which he and his predecessors used to use, his books, papers, and other printed and written matter which he must have within arm's-length. And as he worked on and on in his secluded exclusiveness two nights ago, not even the wisest newspaper correspondent in Washington, certainly no member of Congress, had any vague inkling that the next day he would appear suddenly at the Capitol and read his epoch-making message.

Then toward midnight he had decided to call it a day and begin preparations to retire. At 7:15 o'clock yesterday morning he arose and breakfasted. He spent a few moments over his message again, and next, before starting off on his regular morning trip to a golf-course for a bit of fresh air, he telephoned to Secretary Tumulty's house and broke the unexpected news that he would address a joint session in

the House at midday. Would Mr. Tumulty kindly make arrangements at once for the joint session? Mr. Tumulty would, pulling on his helmet, rubber coat, and boots, and sliding down the brass pole to get at the job quickly. Whereupon the President got into his hat and overcoat. In the driveway was his White House car, like any other town car of elegance except for the ornate Federal shield, tea-cup-sized, on the doors. And then, with two fast-flying motorcycle policemen setting the pace and a whole barrel of Secret Service men chugging along behind, the President was off for his bit of morning golf out near the district-line.

Within two hours, as always, he was back in the White House, had taken his regular after-golf bath, and had put aside his golf-clothes for the well-cut, carefully pressed raiment, so far removed from the regulation baggy trousers which college professors seem to think they are sentenced to wear that the President Wilson of the knife-edge trousers probably never would recognize the Professor Wilson who used to wear mere pants. And now, not quite like the Hon. J. Ham Lewis or the lilies of the field, but a personage of unostentatious elegance, there is a

summons for a secretary, stenographer, for any one needed from an office staff which, through long years of experience has attained an efficiency to be marveled at; and, still secluded in the heart of the White House living-quarters, he starts in to tackle his correspondence, an amazing part of which requires his personal attention. Letter-writing of importance often takes up his time until the luncheon hour. Yesterday, however, with a portentous message to Congress to be read at noon, he dictated somewhat earlier the last letter beginning with the formula, "May I not thank you for your recent letter and suggest that," etc. Again the two speedy motorcycle cops, the car, and the barrel of Secret Service men began to chug eastward, and within a few minutes the President was facing an expectant Congress.

"What 's he going to talk about, Senator?"

"Search me! Never heard he was here till a minute ago."

"Oh, I say, Hills, you newspaper lads know everything. What 's the President got on his chest?"

"How 'd I know, Congressman? I just raced down here from our news bureau when I got the

flash over the telephone that the Big Chief was headed this way. You Democrats on the administration side of the House ought to know something about it. C'm on, spill the news."

"Nope. Sure as your name is Larry Hills, not a soul of us heard he was coming till Joe Tumulty began to get busy this morning. Gollies! can you beat it!"

And that "Gollies!" which the administration Representative ridded himself of yesterday noon as he and the newspaper man raced along a Capitol corridor toward the House side was not near so vehement as a lot of other exclamations which Senators and Representatives, from the President's political camp as well as "the opposition" sides of the House and Senate, let loose almost any time that the matter of the President's exclusive secludedness enters into congressional conversations. The innovation of a President who rarely, almost never, takes individual members of Congress into his confidences causes pathetic bleatings on the part of his congressional friends and admirers and positive brain-storms on the other side of the middle aisle. As a farthest Western representative,— who loomed large in the exciting days of the war declaration,

put it to me months after we had entered the war: "He is the first President in my experience who never lets his extra right hand, which is Congress, know what his private right or left hand is doing. He never talks things over, as his predecessors did, even big things, with a Member before he springs them on us; never confers; never paves the way. He alone of all the Presidents brings or sends us wholly unexpected messages and measures, and then expects us to go ahead and act upon them without our having the slightest notion of how his mind is working on a given measure. Nobody under heaven but himself has any notion, so far as we know, certainly nobody under the dome of the Capitol. He has no confidants, no intimates; so there's no one we can go to in order to get into working touch with him, not even a third party."

There were tears in the voice of the Congressman. Even louder are the private and personally conducted cries of anguish daily coming from congressional lungs, the owners of which had grown accustomed, sometimes throughout a generation of Washington sessions, to seeking the White House, or being sought by it, with much frequency; to sit there intimately for half

an hour, sometimes longer, in close-up conversation with the particular Great White Father that graced the Executive Mansion during a given term. But nowadays Congressmen, high and low, have the feeling that if any particularly important piece of statesmanship is going to be cooked, a certain Personage will attend to the cooking unaided and then serve the whole dish himself. Hence pathetic bleats.

Not that Senators or Representatives never get indoors at the White House to see the President in these days. If one of them is honored with an audience, the preliminary arrangements are made quickly, even to notifying a policeman at a northern gate now closed to the general public that Senator Sidewhiskers will arrive at that gate at a given hour. But as a rule such audiences come *after* the message or measure has been all cooked and served. Yesterday, for instance, after the President had read his notable message to Congress and had lunched between one and two o'clock with his family, callers began to storm that north gate from a few minutes after two o'clock in the afternoon until, with the exception of time taken out for dinner, eleven o'clock last night. Foreign Commissioners, Sen-

ators, Representatives, members of his official family, in and out they passed steadily in an effort to unfold to the President views and ideas that had come to them *after* the President had exploded his message in the joint session. After, always after. And he saw all whom it was physically possible to see, but they did n't sit and chin and smoke for an hour, half an hour, even for fifteen minutes, as in the good old days that were. The President was affability itself as he did most of the necessary talking, briefly, to the point. Then a hand-shake, one of those hand-shakes that passes you onward, with the extreme of cordiality, toward the top of the greased chute that leads to the Open Air Down And Out Club.

"We 've come down here," remarked David Belasco, proudly, to a Senator friend he met on the avenue, "representing the theatrical managers. We 're to go to the White House this afternoon for five minutes."

"Five minutes!" cried the Senator. "What in thunder are you going to do with the other four minutes?" It is on record that Messrs. Belasco, Marc Klaw, George Cohan, and the rest of that delegation did n't know what to do with at least a part of the four minutes. Down to

Washington they had come all primed up with speeches in which they were to show the President that the great war revenue from the tax on theater-tickets and the splendid part the stage had played in raising funds for war-relief work entitled the managers at least to ask that they might be permitted to keep their show shops open on the ten coalless Garfield Mondays then contemplated. But those speeches never were delivered. The President received the managers with his usual cordiality, shook hands, said a few appropriate sentences in appreciation of the stage profession's work along war-relief lines; then another hand-shake, the greased chute, and the managers came back to earth in the great outdoors,— it was round zero that day, too, in Washington,— remembering suddenly as they came out of their daze that not once had they thought to step into the spot-light and unlimber the modulated and sounding phrases carefully rehearsed during their all-night run from Manhattan to the capital.

This morning there was not even a hand-shake indoors round the White House; just the clockwork régime of rising at seven, or seven-fifteen at the latest, breakfast, then whatever golf can

other engagement, scribbled hastily across the bottom of one of the President's engagement cards which lies before me as I write, be overlooked. "5.00 P. M. THE WHITE HOUSE: Delegation of Western Congressmen." They also had a few minutes in the presence, but their engagement evidently was a last-minute one, which never had arisen to the dignity of being carefully typed in advance with the other items listed.

All day every day the President manages to sandwich in between the steady run of appointments more and more dictation of correspondence. Steadily throughout the day also the secretary to the President, who in the earlier Wilson days used to dart in and out of the circular private office adjoining the secretarial desk to confer with the President verbally, now is constantly dictating numberless notes and suggestions and shooting them into the White House recesses at intervals in the hope that the President will find in the brief notes some idea of interest, perhaps of real use. "Dear Governor," so the Tumulty notes begin early in the forenoon and continue until late. And the marginal notations, in the President's handwriting, which decorate the notes when they come back to the

secretary's office again show that the President finds time somehow to read and comment upon all the suggestions that come to him from Mr. Tumulty and his assistants. Here is an office staff which has reason to feel sure, unlike the bleating Congressmen, that it knows "how his mind is working on a given measure." These notes from Mr. Tumulty are now the President's main bridge, his only bridge, that spans the vast expanse which in late days separates him from the public thought on a given measure. Now the secretarial office is the sieve, the chief separator, through which are sifted the thoughts or the personalities which should or should not be presented to the President. Newspaper clippings, editorials, sometimes sheaves of editorials on a given subject, are often included in the notes which the secretary sends farther indoors to his secluded chief. For even now in his unprecedented seclusion the chief presents the paradox of a President who, perhaps more than any of his predecessors, believes a leader should follow the thought of the crowd, and this regardless of the fact that a big part of that crowd still holds to the old-fashioned theory that the only reason one person out of the hundred million receives at

the polls their permission to enter the White House is that their choice is intellectually head and shoulders over the half-baked, scatter-brained "voice of the people"; therefore is expected to lead from the front rank, not the rear. Inasmuch as popular music is bad music, popular painting bad painting, popular —

But to return to the "delegation of Western Congressmen." When they had been hand-shaken out of the presence this evening the President again called it a day and began to prepare for dinner. After dining he decided, as frequently happens, to "take a night off." At least once, sometimes twice, a week he goes to the theater, preferably to a vaudeville or a "musical comedy" performance; or he may devote the evening to reading until bedtime. And again and again one notes on his list of daily engagements advance notices to be ready at a given minute to touch a button in the White House and thereby illuminate the Main Building at the opening of the National Crazy Quilt Exposition in far off What Cheer, Iowa, or light up the conference-hall where the Amalgamated Pretzel Varnishers' Union or the Industrial Association of Carriage Wheel and Zebra Stripers'

Unions of America are in annual convention at Blueduck, Illinois. He plays golf or goes to ball-games not so much as an enthusiastic fan, but as a part of a calculated, systematized program to get fresh air into his lungs and cobwebs from his brain; but he goes to the theater because he likes the stage and all things pertaining to it. Even in these crowded days Raymond Hitchcock, DeWolf Hopper, Frank Tinney, any noted Thespian, can get within hand-shaking distance (they 've done so) and a two minute chat with far greater ease than the average member of Congress can.

But the promiscuous hand-shaking in the White House now is a memory. The New Year's receptions, stupid relics of a capital and nation younger and smaller, and therefore more pliable, have been dispensed with, chiefly because they were boresome functions that kept the President standing for three hours of countless hand-shakes when his hand and mind might better be given to the stupendous tasks which confront a chief executive in a world war. He "does n't want solemnity these days, but he does want efficiency," as it was put to me to-day at the White House. Only on the "cabinet days,"

those Tuesday and Friday afternoons each week which are now about the only times he sees what officially is still his office, is there any of the off-hand greetings. On those two afternoons the President comes from his study far inside the White House about two-fifteen o'clock. Then, and only then, for fifteen minutes there is a semblance of the old-time ease of access to his desk. Almost any one with or without a reason for his greeting — usually with no better reason than a chance "to shake hands with the President"— may be escorted from Secretary Tumulty's office to the President in the adjoining room — any one, that is, who is worthy and is known to his secretary or official family. But promptly at 2:30 o'clock the little party comes to an end; the last of the hand-shakers is withdrawn to outer darkness, and the President and his cabinet get down to business, and stick to it until about 5:45 o'clock that evening.

Saturdays are his free days, his "day out." He plays golf on Saturday mornings, often motors on Saturday afternoons, and rests on Saturday night. His Sundays are devoted to attending religious services and then to a vast amount of reading, the reading being often a

matter of work in a way, inasmuch as a great deal of the Sunday reading these days is devoted to poring over despatches, cable messages, and other papers of an official or semi-official nature. Thus it goes until late at night. By midnight, or shortly before, the White House is a ghost of a mansion, dark and silent, save for the measured tread of soldier guards who in war-time take the place of the policemen guards at nightfall, and with loaded rifles on shoulders slowly pace back and forth until the dawn of a new day.

To-day was not one of the cabinet days; if it had been, I might have seen the President's office in something of its old mood of human activity. I did not want to wander into that circular office and so on into the White House without first waiting until somebody or other came along who would give me permission. Had I done so, who knows but in the corridors I might have bumped into one of the Major Raymond Pullman's fifty-eight varieties of White House cops, some of whom stroll indoors all harnessed up in swagger and statesmanlike morning-coats and creased trousers, camouflaged sartorially and quite as free from that air of having been suddenly all dressed up as one of those

vaudeville acrobats who "open the bill" by coming upon the stage in evening clothes, his hair nicely oiled, before he pulls off everything and stands revealed in pink tights and spangles. One never, never would mistake any of the major's ornate indoor cops for cops; one might fancy, on the spur of the moment, that one had stumbled upon an Italian barber from the South Side of Chicago all garbed up on his bridal day, but otherwise Major Pullman's gorgeous guardians would have an intruder completely fooled.

Fortunately, I did n't have to spend all my afternoon in solitude. By bits strange folk wandered into Secretary Tumulty's office, perhaps a dozen in all, and stood waiting near the open fireplace or sat round the room expectantly. Then the secretary to the President waded through whatever business had been keeping him outdoors and entered. For many minutes thereafter it was a joy to sit on the side lines and watch the deftness, the easy certainty, with which young Mr. Tumulty handled the sieve and did the sifting. A clear-brained, alert, and very efficient little diplomatic embassy is the Hon. Joseph Patrick Tumulty all by himself.

And then came a greatest moment, never to be

forgotten, which showed conclusively that the inner corridor which led from the secretary's office into the innermost private sanctum sanctorum of the President also led from that far study out to the very room in which I was sitting. Steps were heard approaching from those inner recesses, footfalls of a dignity and a strength of tread befitting a President of these United States of America. Conversation in the secretary's office came to an abrupt halt. One almost *heard* the instant silence which fell upon an awestruck room as the steps came near and nearer. And then the door leading back to the President's quarters opened portentously, and every one stood up as the door formed a frame for the graceful physique standing there in the well-made morning-coat, trousers pressed to knife-edge nicety. And there he stood, the Magnificent, the Honorable J. Ham Lewis, fresh from his whole half-hour in the presence. Mauve were his spats, mauve of the evening sky was his cravat, pearl and mauve the kerchief that drooped with care-free care from an upper pocket of a coat as misty gray as a rare Whistler picture, as free from seams or wrinkles as the silken cheek of a sleeping babe. And the one-time Pink

Aurora Borealis, the Pride of the Mississippi Valley, was the Pink Aurora Borealis no more: side-whiskers which were a nation's red badge of glory and pride back in the days when they glowed as ardently as a dawning day in farthest Ind, now had darkened to a rich khaki shade in keeping with the soldierly spirit of these martial days.

"Gentlemen," he said graciously, bowed, and passed his homeward way perhaps forever from our sight. Tears of emotion sprang to my eyes, and the beautiful figure which a great poet had used to express his own emotions at the passing onward of the lovely *Evangeline* involuntarily came to my lips.

Homeward serenely she walked with God's benediction upon her.
When she had passed, it seemed like the ceasing of exquisite music.

My day had not been in vain.

CHAPTER X

THE MUTUAL ADMIRATION CLUB

"STEVE, do you know something?"

The wife was speaking. I'm afraid I was n't paying strict attention. A moment before I had unlocked the door of our hotel-room closet in which I had had secreted since our arrival in Washington the little old black traveling-bag that railway-station redcaps had tried to grab from my hand once they had heard the glassy clink of the contents. I did not answer the wife promptly, my thoughts being centered ruefully upon the extreme emptiness of that little black bag, which now yawned vacantly open in my hand. Marvelous had been the way that the news of the arrival of the little bag in Washington had spread among my old friends and new acquaintances throughout the capital. Day in and day out they had honored me with visits, their eyes glued upon that closet door. And the key to the door, which had worked stiffly when we

first came to the city, now slid the bolt back with the noiseless ease of an automobile engine headed down-grade on its three-thousandth mile.

"Steve, I 'm talking to you! Do you know what I think?"

"No, Mr. Bones. What do you think?"

"Well, I was just thinking this: after looking this town over for a spell I was just thinking how deplorable it is that the best that can be said of the dear old line which we all love to spout so solemnly, 'The voice of the people is the voice of God,' is that it is one of the worst blasphemies ever uttered. I don't think 'the pee-pul' ever in history were —"

"Now wait a minute, old girl," I interrupted, snapping the bag and chucking it down on the closet floor. "Right in our own history, for instance, it was the people, was n't it, that first rose against the fool policies of England toward the colonies and wrote the Declaration of Independence? It was the people who carried the American Revolution to a successful conclusion, 'the common pee-pul,' and then struck off a Constitution that 's never cracked under the strain, was n't it? And again in 1812 it was the people who —"

"Oh hush, Steve! 'The people' never did any of these things. They did resent being taxed without representation, even to the point of armed resistance, and they were quite right in doing so. More power to their elbows. But it was the trained thought of a little handful of leaders, their Ben Franklins and Washingtons and Jeffersons and the like, men who were what they were merely because they *had* lifted themselves far above the mob, who wrote the Declaration and risked their necks by signing it and struck off the Constitution. If it had n't been for those same leaders, England would have thrashed the colonies soundly. The people did n't even fight the Revolution to a successful finish; would n't have, at least, if it were left solely to the people. Whole droves of them would quit when they felt like it after a given campaign, and go back amiably to their own private pursuits, lots of 'em — what we 'd call deserting now. Then their great leaders, who never quit for a minute, would lambaste the quitters among them back into action again. And while Washington and a few more of his kind were making them keep everlastingly at it, another leader, who had educated himself miles

ahead of the people, went to Europe and induced the wisest men in France to send the help which went far toward crushing the English in the colonies. If the Revolution were left to the tavern keepers along the Philadelphia water-front or the farmers and woodsmen up and down the coast, the only result of the whole fuss would have been the annual convention here of the Daughters of the Revolution.

"And as for the War of 1812, it was 'the peepul' right in this City of Washington who scattered like silly sheep when a force of British only about one fifth the size of the American Army opposed to it wandered into sight. Everybody, from the President down, turned tail and let the English walk into Washington and make a bonfire of the White House. They did n't have a real leader. Suppose one lone leader like Phil Sheridan had clattered into town when they were turning tail, something would have happened, would n't it? And who should receive credit for the repulse of the British that would have followed, the five or six American soldiers who could not face a lone Britisher unless directed by some one above the mental and moral level of the dear people, or the leader who single-

handed had snatched victory out of stupid bungling? As the same Phil Sheridan and his kind have done and will do again so long as the world lasts. The people played party politics in that same War of 1812 as they never did before, and botched it from beginning to end thereby, and despite the brilliant work of a few sailor leaders we probably would have lost in the end if England had n't been so terribly exhausted while trying to down a lone individual who happened to be one of the great geniuses of history. 'The pee-pul' make me very weary."

"O, Mom, how *can* you! It was the people, was n't it, who, once we 'd gone into this present war, immediately raised a big army in record time?"

"No; in one sentence you 're wrong twice. A very few leaders, such as they are, passed the conscription law which made any sort of army possible. And it is n't a big army. It 's a puny army compared with the other armies in the present war. What there is of it is doing its work beautifully, and in time, I hope, it will be as good as the French, British, and other armies. But how can you say we have a 'big' army when, as representative of the greatest nation in the

whole war, it is of less importance in a military sense to-day than the army of little Belgium or of tiny Serbia or even of Portugal? Think of it, less important than the little Portuguese Army! And the people, as usual, go along flapping their wings, and screaming abut 'U-S, Us,' and they don't even realize that Portugal is in the war at all.

"What did 'the pee-pul' have to do with raising the present army, small as it is? Nothing. I'd like to see the conscription law referred to a vote of 'the pee-pul,' that's all. What is conscription, anyway, but a legal method of forcing the dear 'pee-pul' to do something that they would n't do properly unless compelled to? And the people of this particular country have overfed themselves for so many years on the notion that business, big business, is everything that they are still pointing with pride to the big business being done in this town as if business were winning the war. Soldiers and sailors and big guns are going to win the war, not big business. If —"

"But listen! We've just started, Mom. Wait at least until —"

"'Wait! wait! wait!' Wait nothing. The

instant that Germany jumped into war little Belgium, or a King who *is* a real leader, had an army against the Germans which was efficient enough to stop the greatest army in the world at least long enough to enable the French Army to race to the firing-line in taxicabs and anything else on wheels that could be commandeered. And here, almost four years later, almost a year after we entered the war ourselves, we 're still at the point where even now it is somewhat of a shock to us to read accounts in the newspapers which show that our men actually are being killed and injured on the battle-lines in France. Months after the first draft was called out, or theoretically called out, there were still about two hundred thousand of that first draft, all supposed to be at least in uniform, toasting their shins round their home fireplaces. Think of it! Declaring war in April, and in the following January two hundred thousand of the first men 'called' still waiting round their homes without even definite news as to when their preliminary training is to be begun. And the dear 'pee-pul' have been spending so much time asking, 'When will the war be over?' that they don't even know that the two hundred thousand are still warming

chairs in their home towns. That 's about all 'the pee-pul' have done since the war started — stand round and ask, 'When will the war end?' A fine way, that, to go up against a mixed-ale brawler, looking back over one's shoulder all the time in the hope that something 'll come along that will stop the scrap. Shucks! 'The pee-pul' are a lot of fussfusses."

"Outside of that, though, we 're all right, are n't we, old Mother Grumble?"

"We are not, and we never shall be all right unless real leaders who are not pacifists at heart jump above the 'pee-pul' and make us stop our monkeyshines — that or a pummeling of 'the pee-pul' by the Germans themselves which will make this crowd over here, even the 'leaders,' so mad they 'll quit asking when the war is going to end and jump in full speed and end it. But there is n't one red-blooded man in high place to-day who in his heart believes even in universal military training — not a single civilian in high executive place, I mean; not one. The whole Mutual Admiration Society is made up of dear souls who inwardly, no matter what they say in print, believe even now that 'diplomatic' efforts to demoralize the Teutonic allies are more

The extreme emptiness of that little black bag